

T H E
W O R K S

Of the REVEREND

EDWARD YOUNG, LL.D.

RECTOR of *Wellwyn* in *Hertfordshire*,

A N D

CHAPLAIN in Ordinary to His MAJESTY.

IN FOUR VOLUMES.

V O L. IV.

L O N D O N :

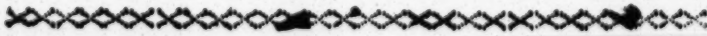
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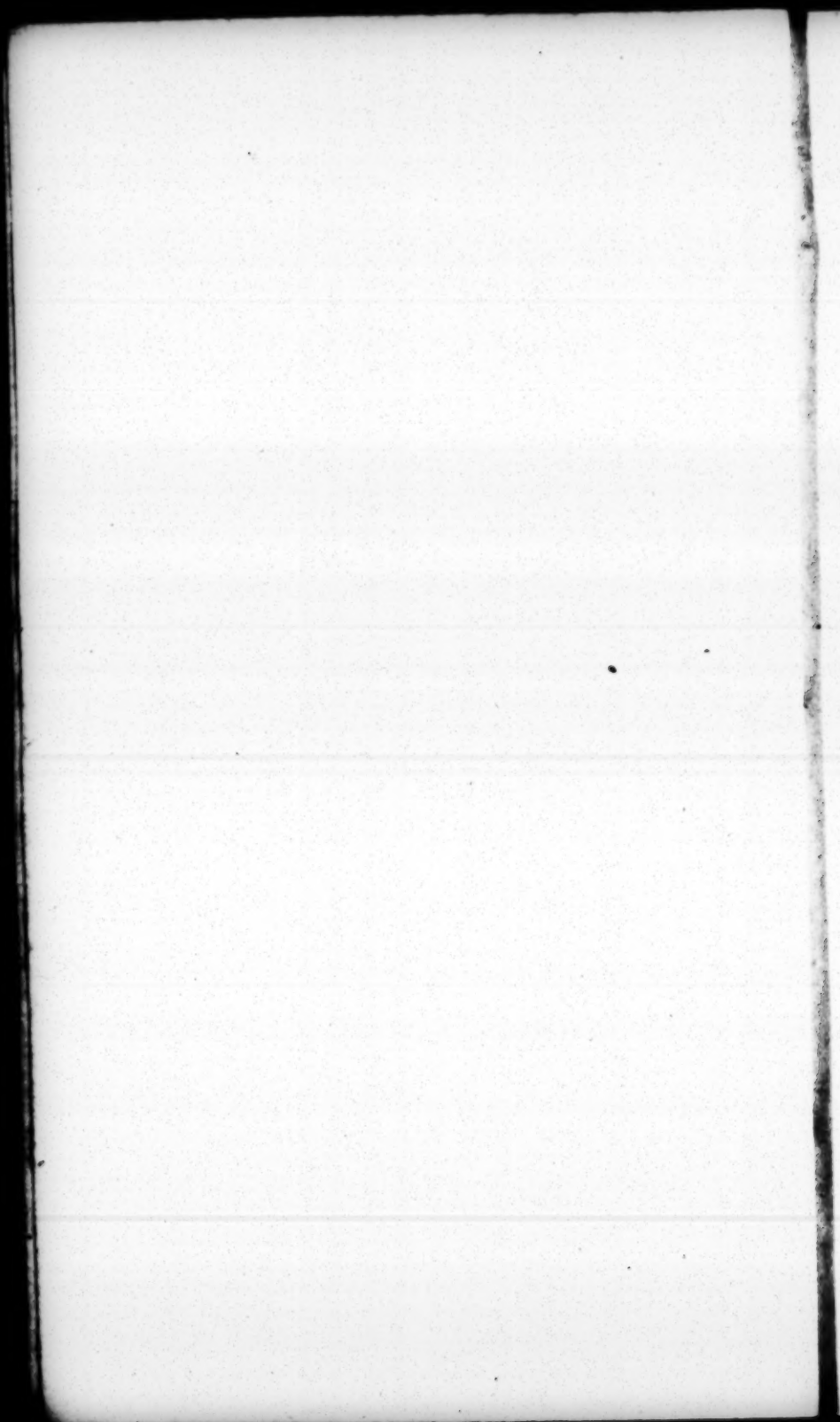
M. DCC. LKV.



THE
CENTAUR
NOT
FABULOUS.
IN
SIX LETTERS to a FRIEND,
ON THE
LIFE in VOGUE.

Doth he not speak parables? Ezek.





T O T H E

L A D Y * * * * * *

MADAM,
YOUR Ladyship's character is so well known, that the public would blame me, if I presented not these papers to YOU, who can so readily put them into the hands of those who want them most.

You will, probably, ask, why *The CENTAUR* is prefix'd as a title to them? The *men of pleasure*, the licentious, and profligate, are the subject of these letters; and in such, as in the fabled Centaur, *the brute runs away with the man*: therefore I call them *Centaurs*. And farther, I call them *Centaurs not fabulous*, because by their scarce half-human conduct, and character, that enigmatical and purely ideal figure of the antients, is not unriddled only, but *realized*.

Your Ladyship's curiosity is great; and you, possibly, are willing to know what account Antiquity gives of the family, or rather breed, of the *Centaurs*. It is as follows:

Of the *Centaurs* the most celebrated was CHIRON. He was a great botanist; and our bitter herb Centory takes its name from him. He thought all herbs bitter, because, being very amorous, he could not find any amongst them, that could abate the fever in his blood: and he left a complaint in the Greek language to that purpose; which Ovid, sick of the same disease, has translated, and transmitted to posterity in his works.

But he was not only a botanist, but a great master of music: he composed an exquisite piece of harmony for young Achilles his pupil, which charm'd Deidamia to his embraces; by whom he had Pyrrhus, in the court of her

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father Nicomedes, a little before he dropp'd his petticoats, and put on his boots for the Trojan war. But what will endear to your Ladyship Chiron's memory beyond any the most renown'd in story, is, that he was not only the venerable father of Operas, but was also the son of a Masquerade; the very first of those numerous sons, with which that prolific entertainment has since multiplied mankind.

It happened thus: Saturn, false to his good wife Ops, had an intrigue with Phillyra. Seeing, one day, his injur'd spouse coming to disturb their intimacy, for escape, he turn'd himself into an HORSE; which occasioned the noble equestrian figure of Chiron, his son.

This, Madam, was the very first of Masquerades. You see the *virtuous* occasion, and the *laudable* fruits of it. Jupiter's masquerading in the form of a BULL, was long after. Europe takes its name from EUROPA, with whom he ran away in that shape. And your friend *Clodius* says, that, probably, we celebrate HORNED MASQUERADES in memory of it. This is the recorded origin of that nocturnal assembly; and, indeed, it is evident to common sense, that the Masquerade had never existed, but for its *then* accidental, and *since* established, subserviency to love.

These, you will say, are wild fables; but they are not without their morals. This fable of Saturn, and Ops, means, that, jealous CONSCIENCE, the soul's lawful wife, will ever disturb *licentious* pleasure; and that there is no means of escaping the persecution, but by becoming quite *brutal* in it. This, and the following explanations of the mystical part of antiquity, have been overlooked by former Commentators, though BACON was among them.

There is a second moral in the present fable. Chiron, Madam, was a *man*, as much, I mean, as the gayer part of your acquaintance. Why then is he represented as a *Centaur*? For two reasons. He was, as I have said before, the son of Saturn, and a very lewd old fellow. Representing him as a Centaur, signifies, that beings of origin truly ce-

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bestial, may debase their nature, forfeit their character, and sink themselves, by licentiousness, into perfect beasts.

Secondly, it signifies, that the rest of the species, the sober part of mankind, *prejudiced* by the abandoned manners of such men, may naturally *imagine*, that they hear them neighing after their wives, and daughters: galloping with more than human haste after temptations; and, therefore, rather insolently prancing on four legs, than decently content with two. This, probably, is the meaning: first, because *prejudice* greatly hurts our discernment, and transforms objects exceedingly. Secondly, because all allow that a Centaur is a mere creature of the *imagination*.

But though Chiron was the most celebrated, yet he was not the most ancient, of our mythological cavalry. Ixion was a primitive man of pleasure; a gallant of Juno, and much in favour. Jupiter, less in his interest, interposed a cloud in her stead, which not long after was brought to bed of the first Centaurs. From that hour Juno commenced a scold; and in that character Virgil makes her swear, that if she can't find friends in heaven, she will ransack hell for them.

The amour of Ixion imports, the great *height* of our expectation, and as great *depth* of our disappointment, in illicit love. And Jupiter's interposing the cloud, intimates, that Heaven decrees this disappointment; and that therefore it is madness to flatter ourselves with hopes of the contrary. The fable would farther teach us, that our imagination, fired by passion, imposes not only on our understanding, but our very senses, which take clouds for goddesses; and adore darkness, as divine.

You see, Madam, that gallantry is hereditary in this illustrious *House*, I should say STABLE: that, therefore, continence may be construed as an argument of bastardy. Who then can blame your gay friends for being loth to be bastardized, and disinherited; to lose honour, patrimony, and mistress, together?

They keep clear of this imputation: but there is one particular, that speaks not so much in their favour; but

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rather calls their legitimacy in question. How comes it to pass, that the posterity of cloud-begotten fires should be so cloudless a generation, that not one spot of stupidity can be found about them?

But though *spotless* in this point, they are not so in another; which may set all right again. Deianira, as a charm to regain the love of her husband Hercules, who was gone astray after Omphale, Queen of Lydia, sent him a shirt dipped in the blood of the Centaur Nessus. But instead of answering her honest end, it gave him a distemper so virulent, that it proved mortal. To balance the disadvantage above, some say, this distemper, at certain seasons, still runs in his *race*. Others rob our modern Centaurs of that credit; imputing their disorder to another cause. And, indeed, the present story tells us, that ladies may convey somewhat else, when they mean only to make a present of their love.

But *worse* than *distemper* is to be feared. You know, Madam, Ixion's remarkable punishment; but, probably, not the full import of it. Jupiter, for the father's sake, detesting his whole *posterity*, designed Ixion's *wheel*, not only as an emblem of their endless *rotation* in unaltered circles of present pleasures; but also, as a *prophecy* of their future *pains*; and an exact representation of that *rack*, which, Prudes say, they deserve for their family-seats.

And now, Madam, all things considered, have I named them wrong? I have named them, as most men of antient renown were, from their personal qualities, and exploits. If you still think me to blame, I flatter myself you will change your mind, when you have read the letters following.

This address to your Ladyship, will my sober readers say, is itself a *Centaur*, of the Pegasean kind, in which the untamed imagination has too much run away with the judgment, and carried it to enormous heights. If your Ladyship will venture, however, to be my fellow-traveller, I promise to carry you safely to an eminence in Fairy-land, from whence you shall survey the most sub-

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prising and amusing scene. To comply with your taste, it shall even be a ludicrous one. Your favourite Centaurs shall be permitted to intrude even into the most solemn groves of sacred meditation. Their grotesque figures shall continually meet your eye, where you the least expect, and where the severe critic and the prude (all but Centauresses are Prudes with you) will be most scandalized to find them.

As a pledge of this promise, accept of my Frontispiece. It offers a sketch which your Ladyship, who know our Centaur's secret accomplishments better than I do, may employ a better hand to perfect.

The statutes of the renowned are set up in public, to kindle honest emulation. In most antient schools of wisdom were the busts, or portraits, of the wise. What, Madam, if, for your modern academy, *Hogarth* should draw a Centaur, not, as usual, with his bow and arrow, but (what will hit my mark as well) with Harlequin's sabre by his side; in a party-coloured jacket of pictured cards, a band of music before, a scaramouch-daemon behind him; a weathercock on his head, a rattle in his hand, the decalogue under his feet; and, for the benefit of *your scholars*, a label out of his mouth, inscribed, as was the temple of Apollo, with *Γινῶσι σεαυτὸν*, in letters of gold [In ME, know thyself]; *they*, your scholars, will take it in the true philosophic sense, and wonder how it came into the mouth of so ridiculous, and, to them, so foreign a monster.

As your Ladyship's assembly, of *all* our hyppodromes, is the most renowned, I hope you will favourably accept the wholesome provender I send you. It is of an anti-circean nature; and may, possibly, turn your monsters into men.

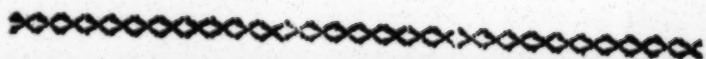
But I detain you: it is SUNDAY NIGHT; and I hear a whole string of your high-bred, unbridled, colts coming in full career; with a blaze in their foreheads, to outbrave my rebukes; and a spring in their heels, to bound high at your balls.

Quadrupedante putrem sonitu quatit ungula campum.

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This, Madam, you understand better than they. But you begin to frown, as you always do at praise. Fear not;—not one word of compliment shall you have from me during our whole journey. I shall carry you at first a heavy trot through rough unbeaten ways, entertaining you unpolitely, with discourse quite foreign to your way of thinking; such as passed in correspondence between me and a friend that would equally despise and be despised among such as you think yours. In the progress of our travels (which I must honestly tell you, will only touch upon, not terminate in, Fairy-land) I shall carry you into an unknown country, where every thing is real, bright, and transporting. If there, compelled by the force of sovereign truth, I should not only assert, but convincingly prove, that you are of rank more than imperial, and present you with an *unflattering* glass, in which, notwithstanding, your own form shall appear with all the charms of an angel——But some breathing-time is necessary to prepare for such an arduous expedition. Therefore, I dismount for the present, and say no more.

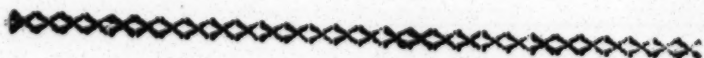
I am, MADAM, &c.

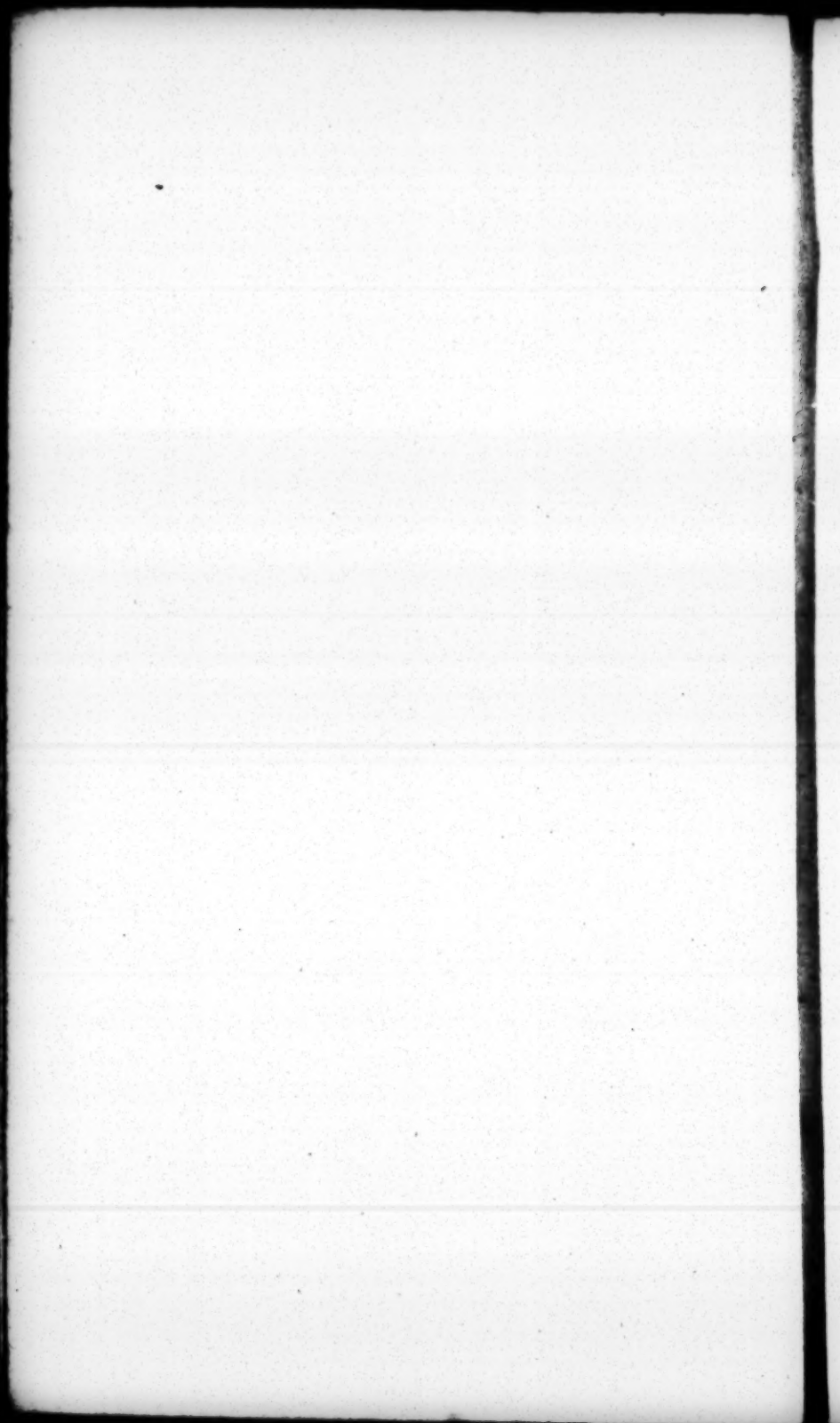


L E T T E R I.

O N

INFIDELITY.





L E T T E R I .

O N

I N F I D E L I T Y .

DEAR SIR,

MAKE no apology for your request; the *world* is your apology. The occasion calls louder on me, than my *friend* can possibly do; and robs me of the credit of having my compliance owing intirely to your desire. Alarmed at our reigning passion for PLEASURE, you press me to write on that subject. Who can forbear? since, if the present canine appetite for it should increase, where is that Bedlam which can receive a whole nation into proper methods of cure?

Your enjoining me one task has engaged me in two. Prevails not INFIDELITY as much as *Pleasure*? And for-ever they must prevail, or decrease, together. *Infidelity* is the parent of the love of pleasure in some; *Eve* doubted, and then eat: it is the consequence of it in others; most of *Eve's* daughters first taste, and then disbelieve. Pleasure, and Infidelity, reciprocally generate each other; and that, necessarily. For faith is intirely the result of reason, and reason is impotent in proportion to the prevalence of sense; therefore sensual pleasure begets infidelity. On the reverse, he that disbelieves a futurity, must be fond of the present, and eagerly swallow its unrivaled delights; and there-

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fore, Infidelity lets loose the rein to pleasure, and gives it an ample range: he then, who would reduce one, must strike at both. *Eve*, and the serpent, fell together; pleasure, like the first, plucks the forbidden fruit; and Infidelity says, with the latter, *Thou shalt not surely die*.

These two, *now* national distempers, fairly divide us between them. One seizes the body; one the mind: and where these two fiery darts have taken place, the Destroyer may spare a third; his work is done. What then must be mine? The task is hard to extract them; for they seem, at present, to be not only poisoned, but barbed, arrows, in the *British* heart.

However, I shall attempt, first, to make the *Infidel*, and then the *Voluptuary*, sensible of his error. I shall recommend belief and virtue, in the room of doubt and dissoluteness; and by (I hope) properly-adapted *devotion*, assist their repentance; that necessary step of transition from one of these states, to the other. And considering into whose hands these Letters will *first* come, (for I design them for the press), with regard to yourself, I shall give you your friend *Eusebius's* character at large. And with regard to your sister, I shall invite her, and her gay favorites, to a funeral, instead of a ball; and, then, I shall enter on subjects not unimportant, nor foreign to these.

As the mind is our superior part, I shall first speak of INFIDELITY, and then of PLEASURE. And it shall be my endeavour so to speak of both, as to render it the province of *wit*, rather than *wisdom*,

to reply. What may silence wisdom, will but provoke wit, whose ambition it is to say most where least is to be said. You may as well attempt to silence an echo by strength of voice, as a wit by the force of reason. They both are but the louder for it : they both will have the last word. How often hear we men with great ingenuity supporting folly ? that is, by wit destroying wisdom ; as the same sort of men, by pleasure destroy happiness ; prone to draw evil out of good, and set things at variance, which, by nature, are allies. Happiness and pleasure, as wisdom and wit, are each other's friends, or foes ; and if foes, of foes the worst. Well-chosen pleasure is a branch of happiness ; well-judging wit is a flower of wisdom : but when these petty subalterns set up for themselves, and counteract their principals, one makes a greater wretch, and the other a grosser fool, than could exist without them : pleasure *then* calls for our compassion, and wit for our contempt. Of how many might the names have slept in safety, had not their unlucky parts awakened a just clamour against them ?

Have we not a recent, and signal instance, how far wit can set wisdom at defiance, and, with its artful brilliances, dazzle common understandings ? That noble author * smiles at a certain text, of which I shall make a serious use, *viz. When the sons of God came in to the daughters of men, they beget giants.* So when great talents fall in love with mean purposes, they beget errors of an enormous

* Lord Bellingbrooke.

size, both in opinion, and in life. What more enormous than to let infidelity gather such strength, even in our decline, as to stand the terrors of a death-bed, and bequeath proud legacies of its poison to the world? Is not this stretching out our boldness even beyond the day of trial? carrying the war into the very borders (if I may so speak) of that *dread Being* we dare oppose? and, desperately presuming to atchieve that in our grave, of which a *Julian* of equal genius, tho' not of equal guilt, despaired on a throne; and that the greatest on earth? *Julian* was for defeating one prophecy; my Lord is for expunging them all; and, with like success. *Vicissi Galilaeæ*, may serve for both.

Take I too great a freedom? It is both folly, and vice, to bear any man ill-will. But it is also folly, and vice, not so to behave, when occasion requires, as that our conduct may be *mistaken* for ill-will, if the prejudiced think fit. Why should our opponents call that *ill-will*, which they, if they were of our opinion, and thought us in a fatal error, and heartily wish'd us well, would, necessarily, do out of perfect love? If the Viscount's admirers relent out of zeal to his honour, I assure them, (tho' I have had no apparition), that his Lordship, now on my side, thanks them not for the favour.

Time was, when those errors, into which he fell, would have been more excusable. For that truth was obscure, and falsehood specious, and opinions endless; and that in these circumstances the mind of man could find no rest, because suspense is anxious, and assent almost inevitably betray'd in-

to mistake ; *this* was the sad, and just complaint of the heathen world, which by GOD's dereliction had lost its way, and could not regain it, by the feeble glimmering of natural light.

But of what have *we* to complain, who grope, and wander, and stumble, at noon-day ? Ours is not ignorance, but perverseness ; not want of a guide, but defection from him. Our noble author, so much admired, because so much in the wrong, declares our light to be darkness ; and with the boasted acuteness of his superior understanding, instead of couching those that are blind, is for putting out the eyes of those that see. Thus, Heaven's supreme blessing on us in the Gospel, is not annulled only, by our perverseness ; but turn'd to much hurt. We are favoured to our misfortune, we are enriched to our loss.

The heathens courted Truth as a mistress, with warm, and sincere, addresses, but could not obtain her. We, having obtained her, treat her as an abandoned age the lawful partners of their beds, with satiety, and disgust, and a wild desire after new embraces. And what have we embraced ? *Thus* runs, at best, the palatable doctrine of an age too knowing to need instruction, and too proud to bear it, from Heaven itself.

“ Whatever notices of duty to God, or man,
 “ are imprinted in us by nature, or deduced by
 “ reason, these are obliging, and necessary to be per-
 “ form'd by all ; as the natural religion : but as
 “ for any positive institutions, or particular forms
 “ of religion, these are of human origin, stamp'd

“ in the political mints of craft, interest, or ambition ; a coin current for the vulgar only.” It is fit, it seems, that the vulgar should be fettered, that their superiors may expatiate more at large, and not fear to meet with rivals in them. And, indeed, if the vulgar had the same principles, and opinions, with many of their masters, their masters would have as fair a chance to have their throats cut, as the murderer to be hanged for it.

As to GOD, they say, “ the natural religion commands us to think worthily, and speak reverently, of Him : but, as some have thought churches derogatory to the notions of an omnipresent Being ; so formal prayers, and solemn services, are no way necessary to a Being omniscient.” They present him (if with any) with a more sublime, and philosophical devotion, stripped of all externals, invisible as the DEITY himself, and, indeed, as incomprehensible to the multitude ; whose religion, like themselves, must have a *body*, as well as a *soul* ; or it will evaporate into nothing. Thus, under pretence of a compliment to *one* divine attribute, they rob *all* of the worship due to them. They pretend to give GOD exalted homage, as the Jews arrayed our blessed LORD in a purple robe, to mock him, not adore. And here our undissembled neglect, if not contempt, of religion, and our bare-faced venality, setting all, even souls, to sale, cannot but recal to mind, that these sister-iniquities, as if naturally connected, went hand-in-hand (as the historian tells us) towards the ruin of the *Feman* commonwealth.

Deos negligere, omnia venalia habere. Sallust.

As to the duties of the second table, they tell us, that “the precepts of nature run evidently against injuries, and injustice; we must, by no means, commit rapine, or murder; these are unsociable crimes: but as for any pleasurable enjoyments of ourselves, why deprive ourselves of these? why starve at a feast Heaven sets before us? We cannot conceive GOD to be a tyrant; to what end has he given desires, but that we should satisfy them? or appetites, but that we should indulge them? Anger and lust, if constitutional, are venial sins.”

Thus the sluices are set open for all sensuality, promiscuous incontinence, and studied arts of excess, to pour in uncontrouled; and by a second compliment to the DEITY, as sincere as my Lord's pretended regard for Christianity, is varnished over a second violation of his laws. Bacchus, and Venus, are recalled to a new apotheosis under a Christian aera; and receive daily sacrifice in the fortunes, health, and common dignity of man. What voluntary victims are we? and as victims of old were crowned with flowers, how gayly does poor, devoted *Britain* bleed at their altars?

In answer to their pleas, it must be observed, that desires and appetites were not given us out of tyranny, but with an intention doubly kind; as a means both of pleasure, and virtue, if gratified, and restrained, as religion directs. In both views they are blessings, but greatest in the last; yet an *Esau* will ever be for preferring the former.

Thus you see, Sir, that both the tables of the decalogue are broken, in a more terrible sense, than they were by *Moses*, at his descent from the mount : and from no dissimilar cause. The sufficiency of human reason is the golden calf which these men set up to be worshipped; and in the frenzies of their extravagant devotion to it, they trample on venerable authority; strike at an oak with an osier; the doctrine of God's own planting, and the growth of ages, with the sudden and fortuitous shoots of imagination; abortive births of an hour. These human improvements on divine revelation may be compared to the profaning the holy Bible with the figures of heathen idols, under *Antiochus Epiphanus*; or rather, to the proud *Roman* emperor, who took the head from Jupiter's statue, and placed his own in its stead. These are bold men; but the boldest, we hope, may be reclaimed. That almighty finger which wrote the divine laws twice in stone, cannot want power to give them a new impression in their apostate hearts.

And that they may the more willingly receive that impression, I shall observe, that, setting aside the immoral consequences of Infidelity, *faith* is necessary on its own account, without relation to any thing else. Faith is not only a means of obeying, but a principal act of obedience. It is not only a needful foundation; it is not only as an altar, on which to sacrifice; but it is a sacrifice itself; and, perhaps, of all the greatest. It is a submission of our understandings, an oblation of our idolized reason, to God; which he requires

so indispensibly, that our whole will and affections, though seemingly a larger sacrifice, will not, without it, be received at our hands.

Does any question this? His Lordship's disciples will be very apt to question it; yet this is true; unless we can suppose the primitive martyrs to have laid down their lives for what was unnecessary to their salvation. For it was not an attestation of their doctrine, but their faith, for which the blessed apostles were persecuted, and the martyrs shed their blood; which they might easily have avoided, if they had insisted only on the *moral* precepts of their new dispensation. Their moral precepts were approved, and welcomed, by the wisest on earth. Nay, our Infidels compliment them, especially when they would give themselves the greater weight in their opposition to our creed; yet, possibly, they had rather subscribe that absurd creed, than stand obliged to practise that morality, which they so much commend.

To renounce or corrupt the faith (one, or both of which is my Lord's point) abstracted from libertine gratifications to follow, or to get rid of fear from those past; there seems to be so little temptation, that I should think none would venture on it, but through ignorance of its guilt. Its guilt, therefore, I have pointed out; which shews that modern Deism, how laudable soever the Deist's life is, is criminal in itself. A virtuous life, rising from a corrupted faith, (if that could possibly be) is as an angel of light supported by a cloven foot; which many seem not to believe, otherwise they

would not be so often pleading the virtue of Deists, as a full absolution of that sect: whereas we are expressly told, that the *Just shall live by faith*; that is, even the just shall not live, that is, be saved, without it.

But though a corrupt faith is sufficiently criminal in itself, yet its guilt rarely rests there; it often produces an irregular life. On the contrary, vicious practice is sure to produce a corrupt faith; or, an absolute renunciation of all belief: for the notices of good and ill are so fairly imprinted on our nature, and the practice of them is so strongly guarded by consequent hope and fear, that no conscience is so hardened, as to sin without the shelter of some pretence. The guilty hush conscience with such soft whispers as these; either, Heaven takes not such cognizance of our actions; or, is not so much concerned about them as some imagine; or, its mercy will not suffer it to be just; or its justice will not suffer it to be so severe, as to punish temporal guilt with eternal pain: all which are corruptions of the faith. Or if these opiates will not do, they proceed to *renounce* the faith. They give themselves a quite-quieting draught of absolute unbelief: a Deity is a dream, and Religion a cheat. And thus they throw off their fears their God, and common sense, together: and are deplorably gay, till they are irremediably undone. How happy might such wretches be, if they knew what a trifle *pleasure* is to *peace*! very trifle it is, even when pleasure is innocent: but when not; when pleasure is an enemy to peace; then, then indeed, it is a trifle no more.

There is a text which must give some surprize to those who doubt whether a bad life occasions a *false*, or *no* belief. It is said, there *must* be heresies; that is, false beliefs. And why? There is certainly no fatal necessity for them, from GOD's destination—No; but there is a *moral* necessity for them from man's corruption. A heart boiling with violent and vicious passions, will send up infatuating fumes to the head; and a delirious giddiness of head will make a man fall into the grossest mistakes, be his natural abilities what they will. A lewd and obstinate will fails not to blind the strongest judgment, as *Delilah* the man of might.

Many, of even those that hold fast the faith, may perhaps not have observed, that faith is *doubly* precious; it is our duty, and our refuge; nay, it is *doubly* our refuge. It rescues our passions from flaming into vice; and it rescues our understanding from darkening into errors. The same qualification which is necessary for us, in order to please GOD, is as necessary to secure ourselves from imposture; and not only from such impostures as *others* may prepare for us, but from our *own*. It is our sole security against our framing impositions to deceive our own judgments (as shewn above), as well as against our incurring crimes to defeat our salvation.

As to the mysterious articles of our faith, which Infidels would by no means have me forget; "Who," say they, "can swallow them?" In truth, none but those who think it no dishonour to their understandings to credit their Creator. *Soci-*

mus, like our Infidels, was one of a narrow throat ; and, out of generous compassion to the Scriptures (which the world, it seems, had misunderstood for 1500 years) was for weeding them of their mysteries ; and rendering them, in the plenitude of his infallible reason, undisgusting, and palatable to all the *rational* part of mankind. Why should honest Jews and Turks be frightened from us by the Trinity ? He was for making religion familiar and inoffensive. And so he did ; and unchristian too. Those things which our hands can grasp, our understandings cannot comprehend. Why then deny to the DEITY Himself the privilege of being one, amidst that multitude of mysteries which He has made ?

Here let me observe, what perhaps has escaped your notice, with regard to the blessed Trinity, which gives our unbelievers the greatest offence. The *Revelation* of it is not only necessary for our understanding the foundation of Christianity, but is also, I conceive, an absolute demonstration of its truth. Because it is a mystery, which by *Nature* could not possibly have entered into the imagination of man ; which they, who most explode it, confess, by their obstinate rejection of it. For why do they reject it, but on that very account ? Our opponents, therefore, in some measure, support us in our attachment to this supreme article of our Creed, which they most condemn ; and (what is somewhat remarkable in favour of our faith) support us in it by the very cause for which it is condemned by them.

Mysteries, that is, those great and hidden things of our religion, whose truth we are assured of by

divine authority, but the manner of their being surpasses our understanding : such as the plurality of persons in the Divine Unity : GOD manifest in the flesh : the operation of the Holy Spirit in the hearts of believers : the spiritual presence of CHRIST in the eucharist : the uniting our scatter'd parts from the dust of death. All which the scriptures have expressly delivered as catholic truths. Several of these, several heretics have rejected ; and the *Socinians* have, in a manner, rejected them all. Faith in these is more acceptable to GOD, than faith in less abstruse articles of our religion ; because it pays that honour which is due to his testimony ; and the more seemingly incredible the matter is which we believe, the more respect we shew to the relator of it. This (putting in a *caveat* against the ridicule of Infidels) may be called *heroic* faith, correspondent to heroic virtue, at which, out of prudence, they must smile.

This heroic faith may be more *acceptable* to GOD (some may say) ; but, sure, not more *useful* to man. It may have a good influence on *another* life ; but what account does *this* find in it ? Who can shew me the *moral* effects of it ?——From faith in these mysteries, man necessarily, and more justly, adores the incomprehensible Majesty of GOD ; and more justly and perfectly contemplates his own littleness, and disproportion of thought to those truths that are vouchsafed to his faith. Hence he heartily renders GOD a due honour for his testimony ; and a due acknowledgment of his professed care of his church ; and a due thankfulness for the mercy of his revelation. He renders a due obedience to his pro-

per government, as a Christian, that is, the authority of the church; and a due assistance to the public peace, which is never safely built but on unity of judgment. And as to his *private* virtue, he keeps in due subjection the pride of understanding, that most vicious affection of the mind, which, if let loose, would be attended with a multitude of evils; and with one in particular, which occasions this letter. But though we could see none of these temporal advantages, yet would it be most reasonable in us to believe; unless we, who think it right to believe implicitly in those on whom our fortune depends, think it wrong to believe implicitly in him, on whom depends our salvation.

But there is, I confess, some error on our own part, with regard to mysteries. We, perhaps, have given some small excuse for our Infidels contempt of mysteries, by more pious, than prudent attempts, that have been sometimes made toward an explanation of them. A mystery explained, is a mystery destroyed: for what is a mystery, but a thing not known? But things not known may reasonably be believed; in the very strangest things there may be truth; and in things very credible, a lie*.

It is with our understandings as with our eyes. Both have their mysteries: both have objects beyond their reach; some accidentally, some absolutely. We see not those objects that are placed in an obscure light, because there is a defect in the medium: we see not those that are vested with too much light, because there is a weakness in the sen-

* Quintil. Institut. l. iv. c. 2.

for, unable to sustain such strong impressions. Thus it is with the objects of our understanding : some things we know not, for want of being duly informed. Salvation was a mystery to the Gentiles ; but ceased so to be when revealed by the gospel. Other things we know not, because they exceed the measure of our comprehension. Thus, some articles of our faith are such mysteries, as by no revelation can cease to be so. They must be mysteries while men are men ; while yet unblest with powers that are not indulged to this imperfect state. As it is bold and vain, so, perhaps, it has even been prejudicial to the truth, to labour at rational evictions of sacred mysteries ; for, by these means, men attempt to comprehend the divine nature, by putting it under some injurious disguise ; as we venture to gaze at the sun, after we have watched it into a cloud.

GOD forbid images of Himself, because it is impossible that any sensible representations could do otherwise than derogate from Him that is invisible : nor can the diminishing imagery of our notions derogate less from Him that is incomprehensible. I presume not to censure those who have made use of illustrations to the proper ends of piety ; all I mean is, that fallible ratiocination should not be made the ground's of faith, whose proper basis is infallible testimony. Nor is it longer faith than while it rests on *that* ; for when I believe, not so much what is revealed, as what my own reason pronounces to be true, I believe not GOD, but myself. I assume, not obey ; and give proof rather of the pride, than humiliation, of my reason ; whereas its humiliation

is a principle end aimed at by God's so strict demand of our faith.

And, indeed, far from humiliation, and even common modesty, must he be, who hopes to give light to those mysteries which St Paul, with all his learning, eloquence, and inspiration, pronounced to be to the Jews a stumbling-block, and to the Greeks, those most subtle of men, foolishness: that is, they thought it folly to believe them, because unintelligible; and because they did not apprehend, that there was any divine authority to compel their belief. And such Greeks have *we*; Epicurean Greeks, sensual, subtle, and unbelieving; and whose celebrated writings are of equal authority with

Quicquid Græcia mendax

Audet in historia.

JUV.

Men, who reject divine assistance as too officious, with a sort of disdain, as if it affronted their own abilities; and whose presumptuous opinions are industriously spread, by pest-men, thro' the land.

With the gross and horrid effects of such opinions, and their consequences, the distempered age groans, and kingdoms shake, and judgments threaten. And well they may. How many private families have their infamous secrets? How many public transactions their barefaced iniquity? High courts of justice have their *jus datum sceleri*, and blush not to plead precedent for the violation of their own laws; and the corruption of the times, for more corruption still? Is not this heaping mountain upon mountain against heaven? and think we, heaven will never return the blow?

We have had already, nay, *now* have, *some* light and merciful admonitions from heaven. But can it be thought, that an age of judgments, and pastimes; of riots, and distresses; of excessive debts, and excessive expence; of public poverty, and private accumulation; of new sects in religion, and new fallies in sin; and every other contradiction to common sense, does not call for *more*? I, Sir, am fastened in the country; nor know I much of that larger and fouler sink of debauchery, in which you breathe. But even here, I know too much. Where is that village that has not its suicides of intemperance; or its bold adventurers for still quicker death from the hand of public justice? And, to confirm that opinion above advanced, of the close tie and mutual growth of vice and unbelief, almost every cottage can afford us one that has *corrupted*, and every palace one that has *renounced*, the faith.

I know, Sir, you will tell me, that it is the business of our common piety, to deplore; of our prayers, to obstruct; and of our lives, rather than our harangues, to confute them. True; for if our Christianity is to be found no-where but in our books, the Christian and Infidel may drop their dispute. A *Tillotson*, and a *Bolingbroke*, are on the same side: their contest is but verbal; their agreement is essential, and their association will prove eternal.

But, Sir, it is our duty to speak and write (if we can), as well as live, against the enemies of our Christian faith. I proceed, therefore, to observe, that the Viscount's arguments against the authority of the scriptures have been long since answered.

But he is not without precedent in this point. This repetition of already refuted arguments, seems to be a deistical privilege, or distemper, from which few of them are free. Even echoes of echoes are to be found amongst them: which evidently shews, that they write not to discover truth, but to spread infection; which old poison re-administred will do, as well as new; and it will be struck deeper into the constitution, by repeating the same dose. Besides, new writers will have new readers. The book may fall into hands untainted before; or, the already-infected may swallow it more greedily in a new vehicle; or, they that were disgusted with it in one vehicle, may relish it in another. I therefore ask pardon: what I mis-called distemper, I find, on second thoughts, is perfect prudence: but such prudence as, with them, would throw a Christian writer into the bottom of contempt.

There are more reasons for Deists to be dissatisfied with themselves than those already given. *Infidel* is an opprobrious name: but time was, when *Deism* was the true religion; and they are for still retaining the credit once due to that character. It is therefore fit for a friend to Christianity, nor less fit for a friend to them, to take notice, that it is impossible for a *good* man, that is, one aiming at the divine favour above all things, to reject an offered revelation, without inquiring into its title to the high character it assumes; and, that it is as impossible (in my opinion) for a *reasonable* man to reject the *Christian revelation*, if he *does* inquire. He, therefore, who continues a Deist, in a land enlightened by the

gospel, must be wanting in goodness, or reason; must be either criminal, or dull. None, therefore, can be more mistaken than they, that profess Deism, for the credit of superior understanding, or for the sake of exercising a more pure, and perfect virtue. Yet these are the only pretences which they do, or dare avow, for their fatal choice. Must not, then, their *real* motive be of a nature which they think prudent to conceal?

But to conceal it, is not easy; for *reason*, our defective reason, in many points of the last moment to man, wants, wishes, calls for a *revelation*; and cannot but accept, when offered, what it calls for: that is, reasonable Deists cannot but become Christians, where the gospel shines.

Or argue thus (for it admits of various proof:) GOD ALMIGHTY would not have made a revelation, but in order to be received. And by whom received? doubtless, by the reasonable, and good. And if by some of them, why not by all? and if all the reasonable, and good, receive it, what must they be that reject it? Therefore revealed religion rejected, proves natural religion disobeyed. I said, above, that Deists were blameable, how good soever their lives might be: but *now* it seems to appear, that their lives cannot be good. Others, perhaps, have forbore speaking so plain, out of charity. I venture on it out of what I conceive to be charity greater still: for nothing that can awaken them can be kindly suppressed.

Cornelius, the centurion, though one of the best of men, thought not the belief of the gospel unne-

cessary to his salvation. But modern Deists, wiser, not better than he, have their objections to the gospel. Their chief objection is against its *mysteries*. There is nothing mysterious, but with regard to things which we either *can not*, or *need not*, understand : *can not*, through the limitation of the human intellect ; or *need not*, through the sufficiency of other means, and motives, for our leading good lives. To what amounts, then, this capital objection, and charge against it ? To no more than this, *viz.* That Christianity performs not, what is impossible to be performed : for it is as impossible for its author, ALMIGHTY GOD, to do *more* than is needful for his gracious end, *viz.* the good lives of mankind ; as to do what, in its nature, is impossible to be done.

Indeed, all their objections to Christianity seem to be no more, nor less, than playing the best card they have ; than using the best expedient they can think of, to keep themselves in countenance, and the world in the dark, as to the true motive of their apostasy. Nor are their objections to be looked on, in those that are men of sense, as an argument of their disbelief, but their dislike. They wish not the mysteries removed ; for that would rob them of a favourite objection. They wish not the darkness of the mysteries removed, but transferred ; transferred from the *doctrines*, to the *moral precepts*. These are without a cloud ; these are too plain for their purpose. None ever fully complied with these, but was easily reconciled to the mysteries of the gospel. The disgusted, despotis

heart commands the passive-obedient head, to fight its unjust quarrel, and say it is its own: so that *Satan* may blame them for some degree of hypocrisy in his favour; may blame them for only pretending to disbelieve. If, on the other hand, Christians were not also hypocrites; hypocrites, I mean, as to practice; they would rob the Deists of their most plausible plea against us; and either lessen their numbers, or encrease their shame.

I hope that some of the Deists, at least some of those whose principles are endangered by them, may admit some little impression from what has been offered. I hope they may discern, and own the *self-accusation* which is, evidently, implied in our Deists renunciation of Christianity: or, if I am mistaken, that they will set me right; for if I have wronged them, I have wronged them much. For, in what a disadvantageous light appear these deserters from Christianity in these pages? A *Deistical* tongue, a *Christian* conscience, and a partly *Pagan* heart! what a sad composition is this? It is a far heavier charge than I wish to find true.

But it is a natural question, "How comes it to pass, that men of parts should so much disaffect the scriptures, so admirable, and still more and more admirable, in proportion to the discernment of their reader?"

Can it be from *ignorance*? It may be so, if their hearts are worse than their heads; for there are parts of scripture which none but a good man can well understand: "Rejoice always; and again I say, Rejoice." This must appear to the vicious

absurd, because impracticable, and therefore un-inspired. To rejoice in tribulation, they have neither cause nor power. Thus, bad manners, almost necessarily, render men Infidels to holy writ. On the contrary, a good life is a key to the scriptures. "The secret of the Lord is with those that fear him." A text this, as unintelligible to the vicious as the former. As he has had no experience, so neither has he any comprehension of its truth. The good man comprehends, and *feels* it too. Thus the scripture, like the cloudy pillar which it records, is light to the true *Israelite*, but darkness to the *Egyptians*. Hence acutest understandings in religious debates often lose their edge.

Can that cause we seek, be *vanity*? It may be said of the Viscount's writings, as of *Catiline*, *Satis eloquentiae, sapientiae parum*. Had his eloquence been less; had those talents been denied him which flattered him with hope of shining a first lustre in the lettered world, he had escaped a temptation which has evidently been too hard for his prudence; and a common-sized head had, probably, left his heart in safety. So formidable a possession is an immortal pen (if his *is* immortal); a pen more fatal to its master than *Cato's* sword.

Or might not *envy* be the cause we seek? "But can these men envy Christians, whom they quit on account of our unhappy mistake?" Man is not only desirous, but ambitious too, of happiness. He but ill bears that another should be happier than himself; because superior happiness is a natural argument of superior wisdom or worth. The man

of a libertine life, knows that the good Christian, if his religion is true, is, on the whole, much happier than himself. Therefore he wishes it to be false ; and endeavours to find it so. And strong endeavours to be in the wrong, Heaven will punish with success. It will permit them to believe their own lie ; that is, to fall on their own sword, which was drawn against the truth.

Non hos quæsitum munus in usus. VIRG.

And I am the more inclined to impute their opposition to *envy*, rather than *vanity* ; because pure vanity is consistent with good-nature, and may be a very candid thing : but envy has bitterness, and ill-will ; and ridicule is the genuine child of ill-nature : ridicule, that offensive trait, of which they are so fond.

Now, tho' nothing is more improper in important debates than raillery ; yet can I make some apology for them. They may, possibly, perceive, that the load on their own misgiving consciences would sink them, were it not for the light expedient of forced mirth, like a bladder filled with wind, to keep them above water : and that they, sometimes, have their doubts, and misgivings of heart, it is reasonable to believe. To give full-established security, is the incommunicable privilege of the gospel.

For the reasons above, I venture to set down *envy* among the causes of Infidelity, tho' (I think) by others overlooked. And further, I believe it to be a *very principal* cause of *lettered* Infidelity in the world. Other, but not greater vices are,

doubtless, the chief cause of Infidelity in lower, and illiterate life ; where sense has no rival in thought, but tyrannizes alone.

But whatever is the cause of their Infidelity, be it *ignorance, vanity, envy*, or any other vice, their Infidelity will naturally have some effect in *our* favour. It is much to be hoped, that it will put us on our guard, and make us better men. Our leading a bad life, is playing into their hands. It is giving them an argument in the debate, against ourselves. Tho' the argument is bad, yet it is an argument still. And since they have none *but* bad arguments, and such they *will* make use of, we should not increase the number. This is like furnishing them with ammunition to protract the war : and tho' the war protracted will not hurt us, yet will it hurt them ; and, as we are Christians, *that* should give us an equal concern.

Secondly, Christianity may thank its *opponents* for much new light, from time to time, thrown in on the sublime excellence of its nature, and the manifestation of its truth : opponents, in *some* sort, more welcome than its *friends* ; as they do it signal service without running it in debt ; and have no demand on our gratitude for the favours they confer. The stronger its adversaries, the greater its triumph : the more it is disputed, the more indisputably will it shine. With what pious pleasure must you see the brightest talents striking at it, with the most hearty good-will, yet dropping harmless, like old Priam's spear ?

Telum imbelles sine ictu

Conjecit; & deo quod pretenus aere repulsum;

Et summo clypei nequicquam umbone perpendit. VIRG.

Christianity that great support of man's welfare, and God's glory, like a well-built arch, the greater load of opposition and reproach its enemy lays on it, the stronger it stands.

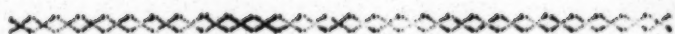
Thirdly. Their antichristian writings may *detect* them: for since (as shewn above) a false faith, or no faith at all, is the natural consequence of a bad life, it is possible that the gentlemen in the opposition, while they are giving us their opinions, may be giving us *more*: they may be discovering their *morals*, while they mean only to teach us their *creed*: and, thus, they may carry, like *Bellerophon*, their own condemnation, while they imagine they are, graciously, conveying intelligence, and new light, to mankind: so that the old proverb, *Bellerophontis literae*, may be a proper motto for the learned labours of them all.

But condemnation from others will be much more supportable than their own; if that should fall on them. And where is he on whom it shall not one day fall? If a man born blind, who had never so much as heard of the sun, moon, and stars, should suddenly receive sight; he would not be more astonished at the first rushing in of those *material* glories, than would the man, by vice struck blind to religion, be, at his first conviction of heavenly truths, *viz.* divine manifestations, awful revelations, fulfilled prophecies, numberless miracles; and one unbroken chain of marvelous expedients from before creation to this hour, for our salvation; those

spiritual luminaries; those (dare I say?) sun, moon, and stars, of the *moral* world; if GOD should give him light. Till then, walking in darkness, he must mistake danger for safety, shame for glory, and mischief for pleasure. Like the blinded of *Sodom*, he reaches eagerly after, and presses hard for enjoyment; but of real enjoyment, of true felicity, he cannot find the door; as I propose shewing in my *next*.

If some part of it may seem too severe, I must observe, that no man can strike fire with a feather. A fire elemental is diffused through all nature tho' locked up in dark matter, and unapparent in most parts of our globe. Thus, I conceive, that there is divine grace spread through all hearts (where not entirely quenched by vice). tho' unactive, and dormant in them. No slight animadversion can awake it. It must be a blow of some force, that strikes it out of a heart of flint. And such there *must* be in these days of darkness, when few sparks of grace are apparent. Such there *must* be when Infidelity prevails; for Infidelity, and faith, are the day, and night, of the moral world. One reveals, the other hides, heaven from our thoughts. Happy am I, if this letter shall occasion the smallest dawn on but one single heart, in this our grand eclipse. With you, dear Sir, the dawn is long since past; and that you may continue in the light, till Heaven, at that knock of *faith* which only will be heard, shall admit you into perfect day, where *undisputed* truth, and *unmistaken* pleasure, with endless glory, crown the Just; this is the prayer of

Your affectionate humble Servant.



L E T T E R I I .

O N

P L E A S U R E .



D 2

L E T T E R I I.

O N

P L E A S U R E.

DEAR SIR,

I Now proceed to say something of *Pleasure*; that subject which you so warmly recommend; not aware, I believe, that it may be long before men, whose faults set the public eye at defiance, will learn to blush when alone in their closets. And till then, what hope of much reformation from the pen? Besides, tho' our transgressions with regard to pleasure are great; yet they are not new. To the scandal of the Antediluvians be it spoken, there were British iniquities before the flood. To such a degree have all moral subjects been exhausted, that it is difficult for a writer on them not to *repeat*, tho' he is no plagiary. But your desires are an apology for my deficiencies in compliance with them.

Whether we are more hardened in Infidelity, or softened in pleasure, may be disputed: but none can deny that the love of pleasure is the root of every crime. Theft, murder, perjury, are a few of its fatal fruits; nor the worst. But I shall not dip so deep in its consequences; yet deep enough to render the name of a *man of pleasure*, which some affect for their honour, not only ridiculous, but detestable.

What an extravagant dominion does *Pleasure*

exercise over us? It is not only the pestilence that walketh in darkness; but an arrow that destroyeth at noon-day. The moon hides her face at our midnight enormities; and the morning blushes on our unfinished debauch. I am almost tempted to say, that our impudent folly puts nature out of countenance. But there is no need by words to exaggerate the fatal truth. Our luxury is beyond example, and beyond bounds; it stops not at the poor: even they that live on alms are infected with it.

It has often been observed, that it is with states, as with men. They have their birth, growth, health, distemper, decay, and death. Men sometimes drop suddenly by an apoplexy; states, by conquest: in full vigor, both. As man owes his mortality to original sin; some states owe their fall to some defect, or infelicity, in their original constitution. But contracted distemper is the most common ruin of states and men: And what national distemper more mortal than our own? On the soft beds of luxury most kingdoms have expired.

If causes should not fail of their usual effect; if our national distemper, far from being cutaneous at present, should reach the vitals of our state; how applicable to this opulent, proud, profligate metropolis, (which calls the sea her own, and whose vices, more diffusive, are without a shore) would be the prophet's sacred dirge over antient *Tyre*; whose sea-born wealth, and hell-born iniquity, let it not be said, was but a prelude to our own? And yet if we proceed in our infernal career, that most infamous reproach may become too true.

The sublime, and most memorable words run thus; and I cannot but think that, at present, they must have a formidable sound in a British ear. "Is this the joyous city? whose antiquity is of days remote? whose merchants were princes, and her traffickers the honourable of the earth? whose revenue was the harvest of rivers? and her exchange the mart of nations? who sat as a queen; stretched out her hand over the seas; and shook the kingdoms? But she is fallen! she is fallen! Heaven has stained the pride of all her glory. How sorely must you be pained at the report?"

Has not *Britain* reason to be more deeply struck with this part of scripture than the rest of mankind? The prophecy as yet, indeed, thro' mercy, is unfulfilled in us: but if *Britain* continues, like *Tyre*,—"To sing as a harlot; to take the harp; to make sweet melody; sing many songs; turn to her hire; and commit fornication with all the kingdoms of the world,"—her fall is to be feared, unless the fate of most former empires betray us into mistake; and that national poison which has ever proved mortal, is mortal no more. If the fate of kingdoms is lodged in a just and impartial hand, what but the grossest self-flattery can banish our fears? And if our fears are banished, leave it not unobserved that our very want of fear is a proof of our danger: for Heaven infatuates, when it determines to destroy.

"But such a general face of affluence and gaiety; are these signs of ruin?" Not signs only, but causes of it too. Not *Babylon* alone has been

smitten at a banquet, and perished in its joys. Most nations have been gayest, when nearest to their end; and, like a taper in the socket, have blazed, as they expired.

Were our fathers to rise from their graves, they would conceive that their fortune had thrown them on some day of public festivity, nor imagine that every day was drunk of the same disease. By our gaiety, we seem to celebrate the perpetual triumph of the millennium; by our vices, to add to it the manners of the antediluvian world; and, by our security under them, to put full confidence in the divine promise that the world shall be drowned no more. If with the vices of the Antediluvians, we had their years too, more might be said in our excuse: but to weigh such a moment against eternity, shews that the balance is in very weak hands. The world, which the divine vengeance swept away for its enormities, was incapable of so great a guilt.

But in so general a dissolution of manners, are there none that stand entitled to more particular blame? Are not our great patrons of luxury a sort of anti-Curtii, who leap into the gulph for the ruin of their country? Their country's ruin they threaten by the malignity of their example; while by the profusion of their expence they nearly finish their own. What a weakness is self-denial? what idle self-tormentors are penitents? what wretched lunatics, or gross suicides, are the noble army of martyrs, if *these* men are in the right? How *cheap* would their pleasures come, if they cost them nothing more than their health, credit, and estates?

Pleasure is in some sort more pernicious than direct vice. Vice has, naturally, some horror in it. It startles, and alarms the conscience, and puts us on our guard. Pleasure, under the colour of being harmless, has an opiate in it ; it stupefies and besots. In the soft lap of Pleasure conscience falls asleep. Vice, losing its horror, becomes familiar. And as vice increases, some expedient becomes necessary to reconcile us to ourselves. Thus, looking out for some shadow of excuse, we naturally slide into groundless doubts, and become Infidels out of pure self-defence.

And, as pleasure makes us Infidels, by stupefying the conscience; so it makes us very bad husbands of temporal enjoyments, by darkening our understandings; and thus unqualifies us for the very point to which *alone* we pretend.

It is this cloud on their understanding which hinders our voluptuaries from discerning, that their blind rage for pleasure turns blessings into their reverse. Birth, education, and abundance, are great blessings; but, abused by pleasure into motives and instruments of indulgence, birth is more ignominious than obscurity; knowledge is more pernicious than ignorance; and abundance more a misfortune than want. Men of rank, (and of such I speak), if wrong, can scarce avoid sinning beyond themselves. How pestilential their example falls on the lower world, which, under the welcome force of such illustrious authority turns dissolute, as much for the sake of their credit, and fortune, as of their lusts; pride, and interest, bringing needless

succour to loose desire; and Tyburn has sometimes reap'd, what Assemblies have sown. Great men in the wrong, are powerful engines of mischief, and, like bursting bombs, destroy themselves, and all around them.

And as to the two supreme blessings, and glories of man, their reason, and immortality; these, as they manage it, flame out into vengeance too great to be mentioned without horror. Their reason serves only to render them more guilty; and their immortality to render endless the sad wages of their guilt.

It is this cloud on our understanding which makes us so little masters in the very science we profess. Happiness is our study, but are we not dunces in it? We know not, or seem not to know, that all *real* enjoyment lyes within the compass of God's commands, which abridge not, but defend them: that when we dip too deep in pleasure, we stir a sediment, that renders it impure, and noxious: that (as much a paradox as it may seem) the best means of arriving at the true pleasures of the body, is to preserve, and cultivate, the powers of the soul; and that a good understanding is, in man, the source, and security, of mere *animal* delight.

Let these gentlemen take notice that I am not against enjoyment; I am as great a lover of it as they; for without a relish of the good things of life, we cannot be thankful. Enjoy, but enjoy reasonably, and thankfully to the great Donor; *that* will secure us from excess. To *enjoy*, is our wisdom, and our *duty*; it is the great lesson of human life;

but a lesson which few have learned; and none less than *these*, who proclaim themselves *masters of art* in it.

It is this pleasure-bred cloud on the understanding, which makes us forget, that virtue is the health of the soul: that all provision and parade from without, can make a Sensualist just as happy, as the same can make an invalid: that both have pains adhering necessarily, to their present state: that both have rather remedies, than joys: that assemblies, balls, masquerades, &c. are but as well-stored hospitals, unnecessary to the sound; and but poor palliatives to the sick: though pretenders to more than health, they confess our distemper; and what is worse, encrease the distemper they confess: and that of distempers the worst, a wrong judgment in our most important point.

I grant, that in the boundless field of licentiousness, some bastard joys may rise. that look gay, more especially at a distance; but they soon wither. No joys are always sweet, and flourish long, but such as have self-approbation for their root, and the divine favour for their shelter. We are for rootless joys, joys beyond appetite; which is the sole root of sensual delight. We are for joys not of man's native growth, but forced up by luxurious art: dugged by great expence: and shone on, not by the divine favor, but a strong imagination, which gives them all their little taste; and makes them apt, like other crude fruits, to surfeit, and destroy. We are, in a word, for joys of our own creation, the seeds of which Heaven never sowed

in our hearts. But we may as well invade another prerogative of Heaven, and, with the tyrant of *Elis*, pretend to make thunder and lightning, as *real* joy. I say *real* joy; joy we may make, but not chearfulness. Joy may subsist, without thought; chearfulness rises from it. Joy is from the pulse; chearfulness from the heart. That may give a momentary flash of pleasure; this alone makes a happy man. And happy men there may be, who never laughed in their lives; and in a situation, where reason calls for the reverse, there is not in nature so melancholy a thing as joy.

It is this intellectual cloud, which hangs, like a fog over every gay resort of our *moral* invalids (though invisible to common eyes), which flings us not only into mistakes, but contradictions. How sick are we of yesterday? yet how fond of to-morrow, though devoted to the same cheat as the past? Which flings us into contradictions not only in reason; but contradictions to sense. We can't believe that fatigue, is fatigue; let its cause be what it will. Too much recreation tires, as much as too much business; yet one we swallow; are choaked by the other. The man of business has, at least, his seventh day's rest. Our fever for folly never intermits. Our week has no sabbath in it. So much harder is the master whom we serve, than that of better men; and yet, to our infamous honour be it spoken, we are better servants than they. How do we run, labour, expend; expose ourselves, hurt our families, resist unbounded, eternal temptations to wis-

dom; offer up the rich sacrifice of conscience and understanding; watch; watch late; and all, but pray for his service? Quite jaded with protracted amusements, we yawn over them. The du'l drone of nominal diversion still humming on, when the short tune of enjoyment is over, lulls us quite asleep. Like the bear in the Fable, we hug our darling to death. Instead of rejoicing in tribulation (of which few among us ever heard), we sorrow in delight: for, to speak the truth (though we would not have it divulged), we tread this eternal round of vanities, less for the pleasure it brings, than for the pain it suspends. It is a refuge, not a prize. Like criminals (as we are). we fly to it from our much-injured, unforgiving foes, from ourselves; which chide and sting us, when alone; when together, we support each others spirits; which is like sailors clinging to each other for safety, when the vessel is sinking. We fly from ourselves, because we first fly from our Maker. Wretched flight! hell is nothing but an entire absence from him; and every partial departure has its proportion of it.

But those deep draughts of pleasure which besot us, must answer for all absurdities; and, among the rest, for our intire ignorance of the nature of that world in which we live. Mirth at a funeral is scarce more indecent and unnatural, than a perpetual flight of gaiety, and burst of exultation, in a world like this: a world, which may seem a paradise to fools. but is an hospital with the wise: a world, in which bare escape is a prime felicity.

Effugere est triumphus.

The numberless pains of body and mind; the dark, solemn approaches to, or dismal vestibules of the grave, as well as opening graves themselves, are so thick scattered over the face of the whole earth, that an unpetrified heart can't look round without feeling an inevitable damp, and general disconsolation; and venting a sigh universal for the whole family of *Adam*, for the lot of all mankind. Nothing but strong faith in eternal life could hinder tears from bursting o'er it: nor are tears too much; for sympathy is the chief duty of human life.

Were one tenth part of the wretchedness *seen*, that is *felt*, it would strike us with horror. Heaven means to make one half of the species a moral lecture to the other. It surrounds us with deplorable objects, not more for the sake of the wretched, than for our own; that our compassion awakened, may awaken our prudence; and teach us what we have *to do*, by shewing us what we have *to fear*. Shall the rich, and the well-educated, throw their abundance down the sink of unprofitable and untasted delights, while untaught multitudes mistake and sin; and indigent multitudes shiver, and starve? While we think we are sparing expences, we are running in debt. How deep are we in arrears to the distressed? The distressed have, from reason, as just a demand on our superfluities, as we have, from law, on our stewards for estates. But this is no *play-debt*, and therefore, without dishonour, undischarged.

Is then my repeated censure of intellectual dark-

ness too severe? I wish it were But alas! how distant from their thoughts are the points the most important? how foreign to their interest, all that is nearest their hearts? When I speak of their darkness, I do not forget my own. There is not that man on earth that does not well deserve censure, and even from them. But there is difference in deviation from the right. *Mulattos* are not *Ethiopi-ans*. I grant in their excuse, that, tho' all can see folly in pleasures past, yet must he be wiser than *Solomon*, who sees it in those to come. Yet wiser than *Solomon*, in this respect, *must* we be, or continue mere ideots; and ideots with regard to the *present* life; for this life's enjoyment lyes, chiefly, in our title to the joys of the next; as earth becomes fruitful from the kind influence of the distant sun.

And now what occasion of advancing any thing more to the condemnation of these sons of *Epicurus*, and in disfavour of Pleasure, than this, *viz.* That by darkening our understandings, it robs us of *this* world; and by stupefying our consciences, of the *next*. So far are they from their boasted happiness, that even in the judgment of a heathen (not to mention the scripture, of much less authority with them), they are dead while yet alive. *Is demum VIVERE, atque animâ frui videtur; qui alicui intentus negotio, aut artis bonae, aut praeclari facinoris famam quaerit.* Sallust.

It is said of their master *Epicurus*, *Deos verbis reliquit, re sustulit.* By his, and their, goddess *Pleasure*, they do just the same. They loudly boast, and effectually destroy, it; the first through want

of modesty ; the last through want of understanding. But they must keep themselves in countenance, though out of heart ; and make themselves some *small* amends from vanity, for what is wanting to reason, and to sense.

Nor tread they their master's steps in this alone. He, out of a swarm of dancing atoms was for making a world : they, out of a giddy whirl of innumerable amusements, those minute particles of Pleasure, are for forming happiness : a system equally philosophical ; and of equal success. A God alone can make one ; the God-like only can achieve the other : and where are they to be found in his hopeful school ?

The *one thing necessary* for happiness is in common to both worlds ; this, and the next. In vain we seek a different receipt for it, one in time, another in eternity. *Virtue* wanting, every thing else becomes necessary to happiness, and ineffectual. To what amounts, then, the boast of their numberless felicities ? It brings, in proof of their happiness, a demonstration of their misery. *A good man shall be satisfied from himself* alone. A bad man shall be dissatisfied, with all the world at his devotion.

But there is a third particular, in which, if they had followed their master, it would have been more for their advantage and credit : an indulgent providence has abundantly provided us with irreprovable pleasures ; why are these swept away with an ungrateful hand, to make room for poisons of our own deadly composition, to be placed in their stead ? *Epicurus* was in love with his gardens. But

that is an amour too innocent for *them*: a garden has ever had the praise, and affection, of the wife. What is requisite to make a wife, and happy man, but reflection, and peace? and both are the natural growth of a garden. Nor is a garden only a promoter of a good man's happiness, but a picture of it; and, in some sort, shews him to himself. Its culture, order, fruitfulness, and seclusion from the world, compared to the weeds, wildness, and exposure of a common field, is no bad emblem of a good man, compared to the multitude. A garden weeds the mind; it weeds it of worldly thoughts; and sows celestial seed in their stead. For what see we there, but what awakens in us our gratitude to Heaven? A garden to the virtuous, is a paradise still extant; a paradise unlost. What a rich present from heaven, of sweet incense to man, was waisted in that breeze? What a delightful entertainment of sight glows on yonder bed, as if, in kindly showers, the watry bow had shed all its most celestial colours on it? Here are no objects that fire the passions: none that do not instruct the understanding, and better the heart, while they delight the sense; but not the sense of *these* men. To them the tulip has no colours; the rose no scent: their palate for pleasure is so deadened, and burnt out, by the violent stroke of higher tastes, as leaves no sensibility for the softer impressions of these; much less for the relish of those philosophic, or moral sentiments, which the verdant walk, clear stream, embowering shade, pendant fruit, or rising flower, those speechless, not

powerless orators, ever praising their great Author, inspire : much less still for their religious inspirations. Who cannot look on a flower till he frightens himself out of Infidelity ? Religion is the natural growth of the works of GOD ; and Infidelity, of the inventions of men

Spiritually blind, deaf, and stupid, they see not the great *Omnipresent* walking in the garden : they hear not his call ; they know not that they are naked ; they hide not among the trees ; but stand in open defiance of his laws. *Religion* is far from them.

And where can we hope religion, if not in age ? And are there *Hecubas* to be found among the bright *Helens* of our times ? Is diversion grown a leveller, like death ? Can assemblies banish distinction, and shew us all dates, like church-yards ? the latter, for *their* years, is the more proper scene. Give me leave, Sir, to address them ; and address them in haste : they may die by to-morrow. To-night they are shining at the assembly. Thither, for a moment, imagination transports me to attend them.

“ So various, Ladies ! and cogent, are the reasons which might call you to this place, that I
 “ am at a loss which to thank for the honour it
 “ receives. Come you to admire, or to be admired ? Your modesty declines the last. Come
 “ you out of kindness, then, to authorize those
 “ amusements, you chuse not to adorn ? or come
 “ you, out of compassion, to make these young
 “ criminals appear more innocent, than they
 “ could appear uncompar’d with superior indiscretion ? or come you, out of piety, to return thanks

" at this *religious house*, for your so narrowly e-
 " scaping the grave? or come you, out of pure
 " generosity, to heighten the mirth of the night?
 " Your point is carried. What borrowed orna-
 " ments are these? Is vanity still in its spring?
 " Is the folly of hairless heads putting forth its
 " gay blossoms in the *December* of life? Age can-
 " not drop its dignity, and yet retain its privileges.
 " It must be laughed at, if it will not be revered;
 " and objects of reverence cannot enter at *these*
 " doors. We reverence age, as we reverence noble
 " birth; on supposition, both: if our supposition
 " proves false, our homage dies.

" A little entertainment, you say, is natural.—
 " What a portentous jumble of seasons, what a
 " violation of nature is this; winter dancing with
 " the spring! Where are the first partakers of your
 " pastimes, when pastimes became you? Their
 " very monuments are in ruins. What real con-
 " nection of heart, or interests, can you have with
 " any now alive? And without such connection,
 " how insipid your commerce with them? Sure
 " you cannot approve *Mezentius's* connection of
 " the living with the dead.

" Hang your hours, though, probably, *few*,
 " so *very* heavy on your hands, that *they* *can*
 " ther bear contempt, than them? *How*
 " ed by the sprightly viol, or hear you yon solemn
 " bell? Wants that the power to call you to
 " your closets, which calls your grand children
 " to their graves? Is it thus you discharge the
 " duties of age to the rising generation? What

“ ever seeds of prudence you would sow in their
 “ hearts, before they can take root, these vanities
 “ blow away ; especially, if you, like the ladies
 “ of *Lapland*, heighten the * *hurricane* yourselves.

“ Have you never heard, my good Ladies! of the
 “ redemption of time ? you carry yours to market,
 “ and sell it for nothing ; nay, you dearly buy it
 “ off your hands. Can nothing but such trifles,
 “ such murder of time, make you think that you
 “ are alive ? Can nothing but the stroke of death
 “ convince you, you shall die ? To their beauty a-
 “ lone, too much amusement is forgiven, even in the
 “ young. What, then, have *you* to plead ?— That
 “ which is fairer than beauty, if you will call it to
 “ your aid : Virtue can reconcile our respect to
 “ wrinkles. It can render age amiable, when bloom
 “ smiles in vain. But vice, and deformity, when
 “ twisted together, is such a *Gorgon*, as turns the
 “ tenderest heart into stone.

“ Pardon, Ladies ! that I presume to call that
 “ vice, which you will soften by some milder name.
 “ What is innocence in youth, may be vice in years.
 “ Besides, mark the mischief of what you call harm-
 “ less expedients to smoothe the rugged path of life.
 “ You spread that path with snares, to the ruin of
 “ those you love. You make *parental authority*,
 “ that natural safeguard of youth, their temptation
 “ to folly ; and *filial obedience*, so lovely, so pious,
 “ the strange cause of their crimes. Through such
 “ mazes of more than folly, when parents lead the
 “ way ; children, out of pure duty, may tread their

* Some assemblies so called.

“ wrong steps. Or, if they have more discernment,
 “ or more grace; what follows?—What you
 “ yourselves will be shocked to hear; and I to tell:
 “ a daughter *blushing* for her who bore her. Which,
 “ to my knowledge, and astonishment, has been
 “ the too memorable, and too deplorable case.”

Here I would fain leave off, and throw a mantle over the nakedness of our own sex: but that would be too great partiality. It is too sure *Adam* also fell. As I have spoken to his daughters, I must speak, Sir, by your permission, now to his *aged* sons. I can speak with more freedom to these: I was forced to spare his daughters, out of decency.

“ Ye first on roll for eternity! why this waste of
 “ time? why is its date quite erased? Your spruce
 “ appearance is a perfect forgery. And deserves it
 “ not the wanted penalty for it? You, for whom
 “ it is almost as unnatural, as for a mole, to be seen
 “ above-ground, what mean you by trespassing on
 “ this nether world? Or if here, ye deserters from
 “ death! to whose corps you belong, why list into
 “ so very foreign a service? Death, the more he is
 “ forgot, the more formidable he grows. But
 “ how could you forget him, who have seen him
 “ snatching from your bosoms such numbers of your
 “ friends? Has he so often knocked at the next
 “ door, and so frequently thook his lance in vain?
 “ Will you drop into the grave on your road to
 “ the ball? You, who, *one* full age of man expired,
 “ commence a *new*, with all the wantonness of
 “ youth, by an antichristian regeneration; a *se-*
 “ *cond* birth into all the foibles of a sensual life!

“ Consider, what tender reverence, what respect
“ mixed with compassion, is paid to years owning
“ their infirmities, and supporting them, as they
“ ought. But infirmities of body dissembled, that
“ those of the mind may be the more indulged ; a
“ vicious mind stinging on a jaded body into shame ;
“ this calls not only for the scorn, but detestation,
“ of mankind.

“ Consider, Sirs ! is there not some mistake ?
“ Do not your minds, through disorder of the
“ machine, go too slow, and misrepresent the time
“ of day ? else, how could men, who have not
“ space sufficient left between them and their
“ graves, for life’s wonted delusions to display
“ their gay phantoms ; who can hardly hope to re-
“ peat to-morrow the farce of to day ; still persist
“ to be boys ? young men, indeed, may see vi-
“ sions of what never shall come to pass ; and be
“ ravished with them ; but old men, in their senses,
“ cannot so much as dream dreams of delight ;
“ such delight, I mean, as yours. What delight
“ can these gay scenes afford you ? I should think
“ you should be more mortified than amused,
“ where you scarce can see a face that does not
“ make you look twenty years older than before.
“ Hope you any regard, or affection among them ?
“ No ; despair even of toleration, but when these
“ *moderns*, for amusement, dip into you, as into
“ chronological tables, to know what happened
“ before the flood : find friends in coëvals, or de-
“ spair.

“ Indeed, my good friends, in *one* sense, most

“ certainly you are strangers upon earth; why
 “ will you not be so in the *best*? That you *might*
 “ be so in the best, is, probably, the sole reason
 “ you are still alive. Men in years, and the clergy,
 “ are the two natural supports of virtue and reli-
 “ gion; that is, the two columns on which public
 “ welfare is built. And the first is the stronger,
 “ as there is less prejudice against it. They both
 “ have higher obligations to be wise than other
 “ men: and if the world sees those higher obli-
 “ gations fail of their due effect, their consciences
 “ will sit easier under the neglect of their own.
 “ The clergy are volunteers; the aged are pres-
 “ sed by nature into the service of wisdom: and if
 “ they both desert, vice may triumph without a
 “ battle, and virtue fall without a mourner.

“ Ye fine men of rank, and parts! a common
 “ soldier (your contempt, no doubt), shall re-
 “ proach you. One of them, requesting dismissal
 “ from Charles Vth, gave this reason for it, *Inter*
 “ *vitae negotia extremumque diem oportet aliquod*
 “ *temporis intercedere*. Much more, *inter vitae vo-*
 “ *luptates*, and our last hour. Will you go to your
 “ graves with your eyes shut, as *Plutarch* tells you
 “ the Spartans went to their beds in the dark? If
 “ so, as reasonable men in years enter their graves
 “ as a harbour; you will strike on yours, as on a
 “ rock. You do not only expose yourselves, but
 “ your whole species. When they that have most
 “ reason to be wise, are the farthest from it;
 “ it sinks the dignity of our common nature,
 “ brings, beyond all other enormities, a reproach

“ on mankind: and gives each individual, as a sufferer, as a sharer in the scandal, a just right not only of censure, but revenge.

“ This will excite my indignation at two notorious offenders; and therefore I shall dare name them. Who are they, but *Salbury*, and *Terrificus*? Their pictures have been partly shown by the famous *Symour*: I shall sketch the rest. These are two perfect heroes in this treacherous rebellion; old offenders in an offence, which till now, they could not begin: who join the galleries of *Paris* to the years of *Neslor*: who read a play-bill, and a bill of mortality, with the same sensation, and aspect: who can amuse themselves with a cathedral service; and go for an hour’s diversion to the funeral of a friend!

“ How many friends have they lost? that is, how often has their confidence in the world been shaken at the root? and give they still full proof of their obstinate adherence to, and cordial incorporation with, it? Has it not daily crumbled away in their fingers? and will they hug it still? How can their hearts still swell with those flattened bubbles of idle joy, so often pricked by death?

“ Ye two antediluvian youths! what greater folly on earth than that of confounding seasons, and not giving their respective appropriations to the different periods of life! Nothing can be in credit, that is out of character; and credit you affect, no one more. If you would find it, let these gentle hints, like the light touch of a magic

“wand, make you shrink from your vernal
 “bloom ; and wither at least to the decencies of
 “fourscore ; for I would make you *some* allow-
 “ance still.

“Know ye not that they who in their wrink-
 “led decline outdive in folly the temerities of
 “youth, and die immaturally at twice the age of
 “man, are void of shame from censure human,
 “and divine ; quite callous to God, and men ?
 “Know you not that such faults after seventy are
 “as severely judged by this world, as the next ? To
 “be born like a wild ass’s colt, is natural ; but
 “not to live so, and retain the colt’s tooth, when
 “all the man’s are fallen out. Time was, when
 “to centaurize was less ridiculous. But unless
 “your equestrian part is now dismissed, laughter
 “is irresistible ; as your friend *Horace* assures you :
Solve senescentem mature sanus equum ; ne
Peccet ad extremum ridendus.

“Instead of surfeiting every public place with your
 “ungodly Omnipresence, you should be reserved
 “as the great Mogul. A little self-annihilation
 “would be the wisest way even for your own va-
 “nity ; for the more we forget our age, the more
 “we remind others of it ; and the younger we
 “would appear, so much older shall we look, in
 “all eyes but our own.

“Yes, gentlemen ! to preserve your dignity,
 “retire like eastern kings. And kings, indeed,
 “you may be, and glorious ones too, if you will
 “be wise : for „ Wisdom is the *crown* of old age,
 “„ and the fear of the Lord is its *glory*.”

Since the witchcraft of *pleasure* is so strong as to turn young men into old, by their infirmities; and old into young, by their affectation and conceit; let us look a little more narrowly into the perverse composition of that marvellous being, which we style a *man of pleasure*; and make somewhat, if possible, like an analysis of it.

The man of pleasure, (tho' I fear he never asked himself the question), of what nature, species, or rank in the creation conceives he himself to be? Does this yet unconstrued, undecyphered creature, consider himself as an *immortal* being? or only as a *rational*? or as a mere *animal*? If as an immortal, let him regard things eternal: if as a rational, let reason reign: if as a mere animal, let him indulge appetite, but not go beyond it; when appetite is satisfied, an animal's meal is over: if as a composition of all three; let it not be a confusion of them; let it be a *composition*; and order alone can preserve that name.

No; he is for neither of these. He is an immortal, without a sense of immortality. He is a rational, dethroning reason; and an animal, transgressing appetite: an unhappy combination, a wretched chaos, of all, without the benefit of either: nay, a sufferer from each, because an abuser of all. They are not, as Heaven designed them, three parties in alliance for his happiness; but three conspirators, of his own making, against his peace.

For mark this immortal maze of human ruin; appetite, reason, and immortality, violate, and are violated by, each other. Subtle reason finds arts

and arguments to tempt appetite beyond her bounds. Unbounded appetite, with stupefying sensuality, bribes reason to drop her dominion. Her dominion dropped renders blind immortality regardless of things eternal : and they being disregarded, all immortality's boundless powers, and desires, devolve on things temporal ; and devolved on them, with violence impel deposed reason, and riotous appetite, to monstrous lengths of extravagance, which had otherwise lain quite beyond both their power, and desire.

Thus stands the perplexed, and hitherto not unraveled case. The man, in his constitution, debauches the brute : the brute debauched, dethrones the man : the dethroned man, and debauched brute, join in rebellion against the immortal : the subdued immortal resigns to them its infinite powers and desires ; which they exert to the destruction absolute of all three.

The man, if not in alliance with an immortal, never would have had an unbounded power and desire. If not in alliance with a brute, he never would have debased them to mean and sordid ends ; never would have confined them to things below : but being joined to both, and thro' perverseness, and stupidity, rendering celestial immortality inglorious, and terrestrial brutality more brutal, he creates a far more miserable being than either of them apart could possibly have been. We may therefore congratulate the *mere* brute on his high prerogative, of being incapable of becoming such a monster of rationality as this. And the

man of pleasure, if modest, will, for the future, give the wall to his horse. He, like *Codrus*, disguises himself, puts off his dignity to rush into danger; and happy for him, if he meets with nothing worse than death.

Reason, and immortality, the *man*, and the *immortal*, these only occasion the calamity; and the poor *animal*, an innocent ally, must suffer with them.

If your sister's favourites will contemplate themselves in any glass but their own, let them look in this *true* mirror; and tho' the features are somewhat monstrous, let them not disown them; since they may change them when they please; and they are pictured so minutely, that they may be the more inclined so to do. For what a hideous ruin of humanity is this? The world after the deluge, a less melancholy sight. Such shocking footsteps sin leaves behind it, in nature animate, and inanimate. Reason, and virtue, are the sole beauty, and sole salvation of all. Through all her realms creation groans without it. The DEITY is all reason in his nature, conduct, and commands. The great, invariable, eternal alternative, throughout his creation, is, or reason, or ruin. To how many ears, in this happy metropolis, is this dismal news!

I was going to say, that reason is the sole basis of happiness; but it is not. There are three kinds of happiness on earth, gradually less, and less. There is a happiness from the exertion of reason, where reason is given: this is the happiness of a *man*. There is an inferior happiness from the gra-

tification of sense, where reason is denied : this is the happiness of a *brute*. And there is a calamitous happiness where reason is suppressed, or abused : and this is the happiness of a *wretch*. You see then in what line of happiness our *fine men* must be content to rank.

I know your sister will call my analysis above, a labyrinth of sophistry. I will therefore give the *man of pleasure's* character in a manner less perplexed, and which she may probably censure as too plain ; and may wish a clue were wanting to find the meaning.

He is one, who, desirous of being more happy than any man *can* be, is less happy than most men *are*.

One, who seeks happiness every where, but where it is to be found.

One, who out-toils the labourer, not only without his wages, but paying dearly for it.

He is an immortal being, that has but two marks of a man about him, upright stature, and the power of playing the fool, which a monkey has not.

He is an immortal being, that triumphs in this single, deplorable, and yet *false* hope, that he shall be as happy as a monkey when they are both dead ; tho' he despairs of being so, while yet alive.

He is an immortal being, that would lose none of its *most* darling delights, if he were a brute in the mire ; but would lose them all intirely, if he were an angel in heaven.

It is certain, therefore, that he desires not to be there : and if he not so much as *desires* it now,

how can he ever *hope* it, when his day of dissipation is over? And if no hope—what is our man of pleasure? a man of distraction, and despair, to-morrow.

And who would buy to-day so dear, if it were so to be bought? as certainly it is not. Doubtless the *true* man of pleasure is he, who preserves order in his compounded nature; and gives the animal, rational, and immortal, their respective dues. Who, as *immortal*, places in the Supreme Being his supreme delight; and, as *rational*, shunning superstitious austerities, and, as *animal*, too great indulgencies; admits of all secular enjoyments that are strictly consistent with his *supreme*. The *true*, and *false*, man of pleasure are brothers; born of the same parent, *viz.* an inextinguishable love of delight: but so superior is one to the other, that like the fabled brothers, *Castor* and *Pollux*, one may be said to be in heaven, the other on earth.

To be more explicit, I would gather three particular branches from this general root of happiness, and present them to your sister, as a specimen of the rest.

There is no man of pleasure without his *Eve*; no *Eve* without her serpent; no serpent without its sting. He that knows not the pure delight, and ever-growing tenderness of a chaste love, knows not the most that the fairest can bestow.

He that knows not the sound cordiality, and constant warmth, of a disinterested friendship, knows not the most that man can enjoy from man.

He that keeps not open a constant intercourse with Heaven by frequent fervors of rational devotion, knows not a joy still sublimer than both.

What are the joys of vice, compared to these? What think their deluded admirers of a magnanimous triumph over strong temptation; of a sweet repose in divine favour and protection; of an indefeasible right to life eternal? Is there not a certain grandeur, and solidity of happiness in this? Is not this better than ranging from the gaming-house to brothels; and with other little fluttering, gilded, noxious, liquorish insects, to be fixing on every nuisance for delight? Sons of *Beelzebub* the god of flies. I like not a certain modest faintheartedness in the friends and advocates of what is right. A Christian should let all see what an animation there is in Christianity, above all that the world may admire besides. Christianity should be the boast, as well as comfort, of our hearts.

And now if we enquire after the cause which has brought us into that fool's paradise, on which I have dwelt so long, we shall see with what good reason *Pleasure* and *Infidelity* are joined together in my plan.

The Scripture ascribes the conquest of the world, that is, of its pleasures, to *Faith*; and is very copious in enumerating renowned instances of it. Were faith as prevalent in us, we too should prove *Alexanders* in the moral world. All agree, that several goods being proposed for our ultimate enjoyment, it is impossible in our natures not to chuse the best. All agree, that God's

promises are better than any thing we can carve for ourselves. And all agree, that they are inconsistent with sin. So that he who will take out his portion in this life, *must* lose it in the next. What then, against our *nature*, and against our *reason*, hinders us from prosecuting our *chiefest good*?—Want of *faith*. All is resolvable into that alone.

For instance. Our temptations are of two kinds; from things that *grieve*, or things that *please*. The former *fright*, the latter *allure* us from our virtue. From poverty, pain, disgrace, or persecution, we fly to falsehood, or fraud, for escape. But those ills are not the immediate cause of it; but want of *faith* in God's promises, that "He will succour us "in *those* exigencies; and deliver us in his good "time; and make all things work together for our "good." On the other hand, when pleasure intices, and carries its point; we do not think those pleasures, be they what they will, preferable to heaven. But heaven is at a distance, and the soul is eager for *present* good. But why is heaven at a distance? for want of faith: for faith is "the *substance* of "things hoped for; and the *evidence* of things not "seen." It antedates the existence of that which is future; and makes "our conversation in heaven, "though we are still in the body; associates us "with angels, though in our solitude; and gives us "greater joy in contemplation, than the world "can give in hand." This is true, or the conduct of those heroes in Scripture had been impracticable! and they, like ourselves, were mere men. Thus *Lu-*

fidelity leads to *Pleasure*; and *Pleasure* confirms *Infidelity*; and both together consummate ruin.

These gentlemen seem to think that the world was made in jest; that there is nothing of moment, or serious in it. There is nothing else. There is not a fly, but has had infinite wisdom concerned, not only in its structure, but in its destination. And was man made only to flutter, sing, and expire? a mere expletive in the mighty work, the marvelous operations of the Almighty? Is joy *their* point? He that to the best of his power has secured the *final stake* has a *sons perennis* of joy within him. He is *satisfied from himself*. They, his reverse, borrow all from *without*. Joy wholly from without is false, precarious, and short. From without it may be gathered; but, like gathered flowers, though fair, and sweet for a season, it must soon wither, and become offensive. Joy from *within*, is like smelling the rose on the tree; it is more sweet and fair; it is lasting; and, I must add, immortal.

As, therefore, I have above offered these gentlemen three expedients for happiness; to persuade their acceptance of them, I shall now give three short maxims, which will sit light on their memories, and (I hope) in time, easy on their hearts.

He that will not *fear*, shall *feel* the wrath of Heaven.

He that lives in the kingdom of *sense*, shall die into the kingdom of *sorrow*.

He shall never truly enjoy his *present* hour, who, never thinks on his *last*.

Let your sister, dear Sir, tell her *grey* pretty fellows, who are apostles to these *Gentiles*, that, if they can advance three maxims of greater truth, or three expedients of greater efficacy to happiness, than those above-mentioned; I am their convert; I exchange my Bible for Bolingbroke; and prepare for the ball: for *N. B.* I am but four-score.

With best wishes to you, and those you love, that is, all mankind; I am,

Dear Sir,

Most affectionately,

Yours.

L E T T E R III.
O N
P L E A S U R E.

IN ANSWER to One received.

DEAR SIR,

THE contents of your Letter damp my joy in hearing from you. Even a good man's approaching death strikes us with *some* concern. I am sorry that the sting which *pleasure* left in your unhappy friend, occasions so swift a decline. How naturally we lay hold on Heaven, when the world sinks under us, and will support our hopes no more! The Piece of Devotion which you desire, you shall receive in my next. I cannot reflect on your friend's distress, and a noble youth whom I myself attended in his extremes, without dwelling still longer on *Pleasure*, which has cost the world so dear.

If Disease and Infirmary make us daily visits in the persons of our neighbours, and friends; and Death, by the same affecting messengers, gives us frequent notice that he will be with us soon :

If, when death arrives, all mankind, however divided before, unanimously close in one opinion, and one wish :

If libertine enjoyments hasten the approach, and

heighten the dread, and embitter the consequences, of death :

If death is the single event sure, and virtue the single pursuit indefeasible ; and the divine favour the single point of absolute importance :

If that favour comes so cheap, that the very leavings (in time, care, and expense) of our *real* enjoyments, would go a great way in the purchase of it :

If the martyr's blood makes that purchase sure ; and it is impossible that *martyrdom*, and *voluptuousness*, should share the same fate :

If the fate to be shared is endless ; and this life but as a moment to an age ; and an age not a moment to eternity ; and eternity as much ours, as the present hour :

If he, that is over-fond of the *present*, or high in expectation from any *future* hour, either knows not *this* world ; or believes not in the *next* :

If all this is true ; that is, if it is day at noon : how happy, like your friend *Eusebius*, to strike early into the right path ; and not so long to slumber in indulgence, like the noble youth (of whom I shall soon speak), as to suffer the birth-day of our understanding to be the last day of our lives ?

I told you, in a former letter, that I would give you your friend *Eusebius's* character at large ; not, to be sure, for your information ; but to place him in opposition to the *men of pleasure* : and so,

Facem preferre pudendis.

JUV.

that their deformity may be set in a stronger light,

for the benefit of those weak eyes, who cannot see a mountain without spectacles; with whom a *Centaur* passes for a man. Or, rather, who think a man of pleasure an extremely happy creature, and, with ancient astronomers, place the *Centaur* in heaven. Their *Sagittarius* there, or eternal hunter, ever aiming at *pleasure*, and ever missing his mark. How very much, the character of *Eusebius* will plainly shew.

Men of pleasure, notwithstanding all the thorns they meet with in their flowery path, imagine all would enter it, but for want of taste, or spirit, or purse: *Eusebius* wants none of these. He wants not a taste for aught that can gratify either imagination or sense; that can make a coxcomb, or debauchè; but he is neither. Nor wants he a purse, or heart, to provide those gratifications. His purse is large; larger his heart; but not corrupt, and nobly *wrong*. He is young, gay, rich, expensive. So far he is with them; but will leave them soon, as the sun slides from under an eclipse. *His* riches widen the circle of his virtues. *Their* riches encrease the number of their crimes. There are two kinds of expense: in both, riches make themselves wings, and fly away. But widely different in their flight: in one they fly away as an eagle toward heaven. In their flight beautiful, and celestial in their end. In the other they fly away as an owl to the desert; ungracious and ill-omened, in their flight, and ending in the desert of ignominy and ruin.

Eusebius, though liberal to the demands of nature, rank, and duty; starves vice, caprice, and fol-

ly. These (the great cormorants of gold), he sends begging to *their* doors; they, as old intimates, welcome and embrace them all. And, if they have not thrice the fortune of *Eusebius*, must soon be beggars themselves. While he, with one half *they* sink in a debauch, lifts beggars (beggars, I mean from fortune, not from folly) into the real comforts of life.

He too has his *amusements*; but not such as deaden, but revive: such as recover the relaxed tone of application; reanimate to new effort; and thus are essential, though pausing, parts of noble, well-judging *industry*. He starts not at a masquerade: nor thinks cards the books of the devil. But thinks all our diversions like long books, that were better epitomized; or, like the books of the *Sybil*, which, as they were lessened in number, rose in their price.

He, as well as they, has his parks, gardens, grottos, cascades, statues, paintings, &c. but enjoys them more. Not because his are better than theirs, but because he is better than they. His paintings have beauties unborrowed from the pencil; and his statues in *his* eyes appear, like *Pygmalion's*, to live; though *mere* marble in *theirs*. His all-animating joy within gives graces to art, and smiles to nature, invisible to common eyes. Objects of sense, and imagination, for their greater power of pleasing, are indebted to the goodness of his heart. For as the sun is itself the most glorious of objects, and makes all others shine, so virtue itself is the greatest of pleasures, and of all other pleasures redoubles the delight.

He and they, though they both value riches, yet, entertain widely different opinions about them. He considers a great fortune, as being put, by a kind Providence, into its honourable commission for doing much good. They consider it as a privilege, or, at least, as an excuse, for the contrary. He, surveying his ample arcades, and lofty domes, rejoices more in what benefits others, than what aggrandizes himself: rejoices more in considering how many mouths he has fed, than in considering how many eyes he has drawn. He triumphs in reflecting to what numbers he has been enabled, by the divine indulgence, to turn, without a miracle, those stones into bread. They, from their huge Babel-like buildings, contract a Babal-like pride, which turns, with regard to those beneath them, their hearts into stone. Such men, in effect, build *downward*; are the more ignoble, that is, the lower, for their height.

He thinks, that Heaven's rich donations imply in them some transfer to the public: *they* think they imply a transfer of the public homage to themselves. Instead of imagining his grandeur to be a demand on the public for its homage, he looks on it as the public's demand on him for bounty, and patronage, of which they have erected such proud promises; and by them raised so just an expectation. He thinks, that their riches (how strangely soever it may sound) run them in debt; and that not to *benefit*, is, to *defraud*.

His humility is equal to his magnificence; and as magnificence with humility speaks more regard

for others than himself, it escapes envy, and ensures general applause. *Their* pride defeats their magnificence, and robs it of that applause, which is its single aim: for it is a great authority which tells us, *That pride is a tree which eats up its own fruit.*

He knows (what *they* consider not) that splendid superiorities cannot be *neutral*, with regard to the characters of those who possess them; that, therefore, men possess them at their peril; that they must degrade, if they do not exalt them. That Heaven, which, in spite of different ranks, levels happiness, designed it as the peculiar curse of the great (if they deserve it) to be lessened by grandeur, and illustriously disgraced. That, if *Apes* and *Crocodiles*, men hurtful or ridiculous, inhabit superb piles, they must despair of being worshipped; though but through vain and keen appetite for public incense, they never had been built.

You see in how many points these men fall short of *Eusebius* in pleasure from *expence*; which, notwithstanding, is an article on which they pique themselves not a little. And give me leave to subjoin one more particular, which will affect them less than the former, though it ought to affect them most of all: *his* wealth has subterranean channels; blesses unseen; and costs the relieved neither blushes, nor thanks. Not one prison have *they* opened; not one tear have *they* dried; which might speak in their favour, when their *own* begin to flow. The sorrows we have relieved are the surest support in our own. The best that can be said of *their* ex-

pences, is, that they are an unwilling encomium on those of your friend.

Sensual, of all our pleasures are the meanest; how low must a soul celestial stoop for them? Yet these, our thirsty sponges of sensuality, who suck up every drop of it, in or out of their way, though they take up the dirt with it, prefer to all the rest. And in these, if in any, they will venture to dispute his superiority. But for reasons, some already mentioned; more, most obvious; he is their superior in these. In pleasures *intellectual*, how far are they behind him? and then the *moral*, they are all his own. It is one of their minute, and meagre pleasures, professedly to decline them: and these are the *supreme*. Moral pleasures, though faintly (in this imperfect state), yet truly taste of heaven; and what is more, insure that heaven of which they taste. And what an inestimable superiority is this? He that can think of death undismayed,

Extremumque diem vitae inter munera ponit,

LUC.

has more enjoyment, even in distress, than they in triumph, with every vain amusement turning reason out of doors, lest it should wound them with one whisper of the grave. On how many melancholy occasions in life should we be glad of an asylum to which to fly? How should we be transported with a thought that had infallible comfort in it? and that thought can be but one; and that one, it is the constant aim, labour, nay boast, of these wise men to destroy.

Eusebius's love of pleasure is equal to theirs;

whence then this vast inequality of happiness? He *commands* his pleasures; some he cultivates; some admits cautiously; others sends blushing away. *Their* pleasures *domineer*; scout them away on vilest errands; bid them throw their patrimony in the dirt of prostitution, or debauch; or dungeon them in midnight dens of fraud and destruction; and command them to whirl it away with a losing card; or stamp it to nothing with a desperate dye. What scaffolds of fatal execution are those guilty boards, where moments determine on fortunes for life; and rage and distraction threaten ruin eternal?

From this thralldom to their pleasures, this wretched impotence of heart, it is, that while *he* has but one, and that a most gracious master, *they* have as many tyrants as there are follies and vices in the world. Ten times a day they change their *Pharaoh*; and why? because his wages are so poor. They have it, indeed, in their power to change their master, but not to break their chain.

The *Romans* once pretended that they had a golden shield which fell from heaven: to secure it from theft, they laid it up among eleven others made of brass. This expedient had been unnecessary against *their* wisdom. They run away by choice with the eleven counterfeits; with a multitude of false, ineffectual pleasures, and leave the celestial, as of no value, to men of less understanding—Virtue, the delight of *Eusebius*, is a celestial shield against every evil of human life. Their pleasures are rather swords, that *pierce them through with many sorrows*.

The contrast how strong! their pleasures die in fruition, and are remembered with regret.—— His survive the present actual enjoyment, and are as sweet in retrospect as in hand. Theirs lessen on repetition; his encrease: theirs create, and aggravate calamities; his avert most, and alleviate the rest: theirs hasten death, and heighten its horrors; his owe their perfection to his final hour, after having heightened, and lengthened, all the blessings of life. And what a wretch is that happiness, and what an idiot that wisdom, that can offer no comfort in the days of darkness, and the hours of death? In a word, *their* wretched joys flourish, like dismal weeping willows watered by a ditch: poor the figure they make; flux and obscure the ground on which they stand: *his* flourish like cedars of *Libanus*, from the fountains of heaven; and are rooted in a rock, the rock of his salvation.

It is this superior ground on which he stands, which imparts that inimitable sweetness of air, aspect and deportment, which marks him among multitudes of the gayest, for the gay. *They*, like things gilt, have much to shew; much more to hide; are all darkness within. *He*, like a diamond, is transparent, and shines at heart. He looks, as if *virtue*, according to the wish of some sages, was at last become visible, and shone through him, in person, not precept, making a visit to mankind: and man is mended by looking on him.

Now, please, Sir, to observe, to what an astonishing degree that intellectual darkness, mentioned in my former letter, prevails in these men, that

would outshine all the world. What is their chief boast? Why this, that they *make the most* of this life. Whereas the very fundamental difference between them and *Eusebius*, is, That they make nothing of this world, because they design to make their all of it. He makes much of this world, because he holds it as little; 'because ever having the sentiments, without the terrors, of death bed, he never cuts off this life from the thoughts of the next; but sees his whole existence in one unbroken thread extended before him.

But before I dismiss your friend *Eusebius*, tho' he has made you a very long visit, I must take notice of one particular more. These gentlemen pique themselves on their epitome of all virtue and religion, *benevolence*. If they had it, it would confute most I have said; and make them very happy: for it may stand as a general maxim, that men are happy in proportion to their good-will: nor is it strange, that, to the greatest duty, should, by nature, belong the greatest reward. But their title to this virtue is not clear. The reason they so loudly pretend to it, is, because they know they have it not. The weakest side of a citadel is to be defended most. *Eusebius*, on *his* principles, *must* have universal good-will. Self-love obliges him to it; and his own happy state of mind inclines him the same way: for all are most kind to others, when most easy and pleased with themselves. On *their* principles, that this world is *all*; or at least, all they will concern themselves about; self-love obliges them to the contrary: and their un-

easiness in themselves second that obligation ; so that you may as well expect to find an angel among the dissolute, as a friend. And, indeed, can any expect that they should love them, better than their own souls ? yet that would they do, if they cared for them at all.

But, instead of endeavouring to prove what needs no proof, I shall present you with the picture of one of these great lovers of all mankind, if you will promise not to cut his throat ; which picture, better than a Demosthenes, will prove my point. You will know whom I mean, when I tell you, that he is enamour'd of the charms, and deep in the mysteries of *play*. That is, he is so fond of riches, (which a good Judge tells us, * *nemo bonus unquam concupivit*), of riches is he so over-fond, that he is quite miserable if denied a daily chance of being stripped to beggary. Greater professions of friendship can no man make, than this arch-promiser : better proofs of the contrary can no man give. He never did a favour that proved barren to his own designs, but he sent a curse after it. All his kindnesses are artificial flies ; if nothing is caught, they are pocketed again. “ *Hook him, or hang him,*” is a favourite maxim of his own coining. He smiles, indeed, with great complacency on a croud-ed levee of devoted friends ; with no less than on a hand of good cards. And his hope from both is just the same ; that is, so to play them off, as to win his game. That done, if interest, or humour bids, he throws them aside as a foul pack, and

* Sallust.

calls for new ; to shuffle, and cheat, and play tricks with, as before. He considers fools, as trumps, with which he is sure to win. If there are no fools to be taken in, he makes a pretty good hand of it with a knave of the right suit. If he is so unlucky as not to be blessed with either, he gives out, and, for that time, plays no more : for, without a good hand, a bad heart is insupportable. But prosperity sooths remorse, and lays conscience asleep. This is one who knows the world ; which generally means, one that knows not God. He never thought of that great, final, stake, with regard to which, he, that honestly but desires it, is sure to win ; and he, that plays foul the most dexterously, is sure to be undone. Such is *Avidienus*, such is that *good* man, who, as freely as eat his meal, could lay down his life for his friend.

But, in excuse for such men, I must own, that, for such as place their all here, there can be no shadow of social happiness but from deceiving, or being deceived. From *deceiving*, and so finding some account in their villainy : or from *being deceived*, and so finding some account in their folly. For real friendship amongst them is impossible : and, indeed, to hope a friend in any man, that is not truly his own friend, is absurd. From this account, it is evident, that the chief fountain of happiness is dry'd up in their hearts.

A *wretch*, almost smothered with all the reputed means of happiness, would of all objects be the most ridiculous, were it not the most melancholy too. *Diogenes* went about the city of *Athens* beg-

ging to the statues : being asked the reason, he said, he was learning to bear a repulse. These gentlemen should learn the same lesson ; no statue can be dearer than most of their pursuits, when they ask *real* pleasure of them.

These are the men, who, while Providence lays the reins of free-will on their wanton necks, rush headlong into even unimportunate temptations. But when it shall put *its hook in their nose, and its bridle in their jaws* ; when it shall drag them into the condition of your unhappy friend ; or worse, when the tattered, convulsed body, shall be shaking out an unwilling soul, loth to leave it for a still worse habitation ; then, oh ! what a change !— It places full before me the last hours of that noble youth I mentioned above. *Last hours* full of anguish ! how fit to be remembered by those that wish peace to their own. This is the *funeral* to which, in my first letter, I promised to invite your sister *Sempronia*, and her gay admirers ; *Sempronia*, who delights *Pfallere, & cantare, elegantius quam necesse est probae*. And what invitation more kind than that for which she may thank me for ever, when other entertainments end ? If *they* have their wine, *this* has its nectar. Its cup of salvation, pressed from that *Vine, whose leaves heal the nations*, and whose swelling clusters teem with eternal bliss. Funeral solemnities are more for the sake of the living than the *dead*. What a trifle that honour *they* receive from them, to the benefit *we* may reap from that affecting scene !

Oh ! Sir, how affecting ! It is still before my

eyes. That wretched youth dies again ! Again I am smitten with his death. It wounds me even in remembrance : what, then, the scene itself ! No words can paint it ; no time efface it ; I meet it in my dreams ; I shall bear it to my grave.

I am about to represent to you the last hours of a person of high birth, and high spirit ; of great parts, and strong passions, every way accomplished, nor least in iniquity. His unkind treatment was the death of a most amiable wife ; and his great extravagance, in effect, disinherited his only child.

But to my point. The *death-bed* of a profligate is next in horror to that abyfs, to which it leads. It has the most of hell that is visible on earth. And he that has seen it, has more than *faith* to confirm him in his creed. I see it now. For who can forget it ? Are there in it no flames, and furies ?—You know not, then, what a scar'd imagination can figure ; what a guilty heart can feel. How dismal is it ! The two great enemies of soul and body, *sickness* and *sin*, sink and confound his friend ; silence and darken the shocking scene. Sickness excludes the *light* of heaven ; and sin, its blessed *hope*. Oh ! double darkness ! more than *Egyptian* ! Acutely to be felt !

How unlike those illuminated revels of which he was the soul ? Did this poor, pallid, scarce-animated mass dictate in the cabinet of *Pleasure* ; pronounce the fashion ; and teach the gayest to be gay ? Are these the trophies of his *Paphian* conquests ? these the triumphs to be bought with heaven ? Is this he who smote all *their* hearts with envy at his pre-

eminence in guilt? See, how he lyes, a sad, deserted outcast, on a narrow isthmus between time and eternity? for he is scarce alive. Lashed and overwhelmed on one side, by the sense of sin; on the other, by the dread of punishment! Beyond the reach of human help, and in despair of divine!

His dissipated fortune, impoverished babe, and murdered wife, ly heavy on him: the ghost of his murdered time (for now no more is left), all stained with folly and gashed with vice, haunts his distracted thought. Conscience, which long had slept, *awakes like a giant refreshed with wine*; lays waste all his *former* thoughts, and desires; and, like a long-deposed, *now* victorious prince, on his bleeding heart, imposes, inflicts, its *own*. Its late soft whispers are *thunder* in his ears; and all means of grace rejected, exploded, ridiculed, is the *bolt* that strikes him dead; dead even to the thoughts of death. In deeper distress, despair of life is forgot. He lyes a wretched wreck of man on the shore of eternity, and the next breath he draws, blows him off into ruin.

The greatest profligate is, at least, a momentary saint, at such a sight: for this is a sight which plucks off the mask of folly, strips her of her gay disguise, which glittered in the false lights of this world's mummery, and makes her appear to be folly, to the greatest fool.

How think we then? Is not the death-bed of a profligate the most natural and powerful antidote for the poison of his example? Heals not the bruised scorpion the wound it gave? Intends not Hea-

ven, that, struck with the terrors of such an exit, we should provide comfort for our own? Would not he, who departs obdurate from it, continue adamant, though one rose from the dead? for such a scene partly draws aside the curtain that divides time from futurity; and, in some measure, gives to sight that *tremendous*, of which we only had the feeble report before.

Is not this then a prime school of wisdom? are not they obliged, that are invited to this? for what else should reclaim us? The pulpit? We are prejudiced against it. Besides, an agonizing profligate, though *silent*, out-preaches the most celebrated the pulpit ever knew. But, if he speaks, his words might instruct the best instructors of mankind. Mixt in the warm converse of life, we think with men; on a death-bed, with God.

But there are two lessons of this school written, as it were, in capitals, which they that run may read. *First*, he that, in this his minority, this school of discipline, this field of conflict, instead of grasping the weapons of his warfare, is for ever gathering flowers, and catching at butterflies, with his unarmed hand; ever making idle pleasures his pursuit; must pay for it his vast reversion; and, on opening his final account (of which a death-bed breaks the seal), shall find himself a beggar; a beggar past beggary; and shall passionately wish, that his very being were added to the rest of his loss.

Secondly, He shall find, that *truth*, divine truth, however, through life, injured, wounded, suppressed, is insuppressible, victorious, immortal. That,

though with mountains overwhelmed, it will, one day, burst out like the fires of *Actna*; visible, bright and tormenting, as the most raging flame. As now (oh! my friend!) I shall too plainly prove.

The sad evening before the death of that noble youth, whose last hours suggested these thoughts, I was with him. No one was there, but his physician, and an intimate whom he loved, and whom he had ruined. At my coming in, he said;

“ You and the physician are come too late.—I have neither life, nor hope. You both aim at miracles. You would raise the dead.”

Heaven, I said, was merciful.

“ Or I could not have been thus guilty. What has it not done to *blefs*, and to *save* me?—I have been too strong for Omnipotence! I plucked down ruin.”

I said, the blessed Redeemer—

“ Hold! hold! you wound me!—That is the rock on which I split—I denied his name.”

Refusing to hear any thing from me, or take any thing from the physician, he lay silent, as far as sudden darts of pain would permit, 'till the clock struck. Then with vehemence;

“ Oh, time! time! It is fit thou shouldst thus strike thy murderer to the heart.—How art thou fled for ever!—A month!—Oh, for a single week! I ask not for years. Though an age were too little for the much I have to do.”

On my saying, we could not do too much: that heaven was a blessed place—

“ So much the worse. 'Tis lost! 'tis lost!—

"Heaven is to me the severest part of Hell!"

Soon after, I proposed prayer.

"Pray you that can I never prayed. I cannot pray—Nor need I. Is not heaven on my side already? It closes with my conscience. Its severest strokes but second my own."

His friend being much touched, even to tears, at this (who could forbear? I could not), with a most affectionate look, he said:

"Keep those tears for thyself. I have undone thee.—Dost weep for me? that's cruel. What can pain me more?"

Here his friend, too much affected, would have left him.

"No, stay. *Thou* still may'st hope;—therefore hear me. How madly have I talked? How madly hast thou listened, and believed? But look on my present state, as a full answer to thee, and to myself. This body is all weakness and pain; but my soul, as if stung up by torment to greater strength and spirit, is full powerful to reason; full mighty to suffer. And that, which thus triumphs within the jaws of mortality, is, doubtless, *immortal*.—And, as for a *Deity*, nothing less than an Almighty could inflict what I feel."

I was about to congratulate this passive, involuntary confessor, on his asserting the two prime articles of his creed, extorted by the rack of nature; when he thus, very passionately:

"No, no! let me speak on. I have not long to speak—My much injured friend! my soul, as my body, lyes in ruins; in scattered fragments

“ of broken thought : remorse for the past throws
 “ my thought on the future. Worse dread of the
 “ future, strikes it back on the past. I turn, and
 “ turn, and find no ray. Didst thou feel half the
 “ mountain that is on me, thou wouldst struggle
 “ with the martyr for his stake; and bless Heaven
 “ for the flames;—*that* is not an everlasting flame;
 “ *that* is not an unquenchable fire.”

How were we struck ! yet, soon after, still more.
 With what an eye of distraction, what a face of
 despair, he cried out :

“ My principles have poisoned my friend ; my
 “ extravagance has beggared my boy ; my unkind-
 “ ness has murdered my wife !—— And is there
 “ another Hell ?—— Oh ! Thou blasphemed, yet
 “ most indulgent, LORD GOD ! Hell itself is a re-
 “ fuge, if it hides me from thy frown.”

Soon after, his understanding failed. His terrified
 imagination uttered horrors not to be repeated, or
 ever forgot. And ere the sun (which I hope has
 seen few like him) arose, the gay, young, noble, in-
 genious, accomplished, and most wretched *Alta-*
mont expired.

If this is a man of pleasure, what is a man of
 pain ? How quick, how total, is the transit of these
Ibaetortiadés ! in what a dismal gloom they set for
 ever ! how short, alas ! the day of their rejoicing !
 For a moment they glitter, they dazzle. In a
 moment, where are they ? Oblivion covers their
 memories. Ah ! would it did ! Infamy snatches
 them from oblivion. In the long-living annals of
 infamy their triumphs are recorded. Thy sufferings,

still bleed in the bosom (poor *Altamont*!) of the heart-stricken friend: for *Altamont* had a friend: He might have had many. His transient morning might have been the dawn of an immortal day. His name might have been gloriously enrolled in the records of eternity. His memory might have left a sweet fragrance behind it, grateful to the surviving friend, salutary to the succeeding generation. With what capacities was he endowed, with what advantages, for being greatly good? But with the talents of an angel, a man may be a fool. If he judges amiss in the supreme point, judging right in all else but aggravates his folly; as it shews him wrong, though blessed with the best capacity of being right.

Such, so fatal, when abused, are the greatest blessings of Heaven. Heaven grant *his* agonies were an expiation of the past; not a presage, and sad specimen, of the future. That his surviving companions and admirers may never suffer the same, give me leave to speak to them, while this affecting object is (or might be) in their sight.

“Ye staunch pursuers of pleasure, opening in full
“cry on its burning scent! who run yourselves
“out of breath, health, credit, estate, and often
“life, after that you cannot catch! for a moment,
“slacken your speed, and cool the fervor of your
“chace. It is a friend that calls, and he is his *own*,
“that hears.

“If there is a scene on earth, in which you can
“find greater advantage, than in that to which
“you have been invited, do not come; if there is

“ not, indulge me in a few words, which may not
 “ be soon forgot : at least, they will recur to your
 “ thoughts, they will recur to your feeling hearts,
 “ when your present jovial chace is over ; when
 “ *pleasure* is no more.

“ It will be grateful to your friend deceased,
 “ whom you were always willing to oblige, if,
 “ with his accomplishments, you remember his
 “ faults ; for then you will not forget your *own* ;
 “ but read, in his deep distress, a strong caution a-
 “ gainst them. Affords not the rock on which he
 “ split, a solid basis for your safety ? Has he not
 “ well-marked where mischief lyes ? See you not
 “ the wreck of that gallant first-rate ? or rather,
 “ is he not a beacon, lighted up by kind Providence,
 “ to guide you safe through the dangerous voyage
 “ of human life ?

“ He once, as you now, imagined himself, in this
 “ life, Immortal. Was he not mistaken ? He has
 “ taken his final flight ; whither, who can tell ? If
 “ you continue yours, in the same fatal track, who
 “ is he that *cannot* tell where the folly must end ?
 “ Smitten, transfixed, when most secure, from the
 “ most towering heights he dropped, at once, into
 “ depths of distress, not to be fathomed by man.
 “ In gaiety of heart defy not the danger. Are
 “ there not more arrows in the same quiver ? and
 “ are not you as fair and tempting a mark ? more
 “ tempting, if unadmonished, and mounting still
 “ over his forgotten tomb. And whom dare you
 “ tempt ? an Archer that never missed his mark.

“ But you, from your gay pavilion, embowered

“ in roses, see no threatening prospects; no dangers
 “ of death.—Oh, Sirs! Death delights to ly hid
 “ in thickets of roses! How often the gayest fall
 “ first in his snare? yet even this is too gentle, too
 “ mild, to answer the good-will of Heaven; it can-
 “ not keep the world in awe

“ What uncommon fortitude is needful to bear
 “ prosperities unhurt? It is now sunshine with you;
 “ and you think all is well. It is the season
 “ of indulgence.—But seasons will change. You,
 “ that are now all social comfort, gathered close
 “ in glad clusters, and (like embodied birds of
 “ passage bound for new climes) on your im-
 “ patient wing for new delights! what will you
 “ do, when each of you, severed from the rest, an
 “ unexperienced, unexpected recluse, lyes sorely
 “ but the two greatest strangers, his own heart,
 “ pained; dreading worse; none to converse with,
 “ and him who made it; and neither at peace with
 “ him? Say, ye strangers to care, and abounders in
 “ mirth! what will he do, when he finds himself
 “ still subsisting in a state, where none of those plea-
 “ sures, for which alone he wished to subsist, can
 “ possibly any longer subsist with him? When
 “ the dark matter at the centre will not be more
 “ foreign to him, than that which now beats high
 “ in his pulse, and flushes in his cheek; and stings
 “ him on to schemes, that laugh at such lectures as
 “ these? When he finds himself led, by the soft
 “ hand of *Pleasure* to those dismal gates, which
 “ she herself will never, never, never, enter? .

“ Consider, my good friends! you still retain the

" name of Christians; and have heard of the scrip-
 " tures. To speak their language, if Christians
 " are racers, you have not yet started: if warriors,
 " your armour is not yet on: if labourers in the
 " vineyard, you pluck down the vine, and get
 " drunk with the grapes: if watchmen, your nap is
 " not yet over. There is no man, but in some part
 " of life, either stung by self-moved conscience, or
 " alarmed by some providential event, as out of a
 " long idle dream, starts at once into his senses.
 " The longer the dream, the greater his surprize
 " and pain; and, if he nods to the last, the pain
 " and horror (as too well has been proved) is inex-
 " pressible.

" Cannot that awful truth interrupt your slum-
 " ber? He sleeps sound indeed, at whose ear a
 " friend's knell shall knock in vain. But, setting
 " friendship aside; granting that, with men of your
 " cast, a friend dead is a friend annihilated; ask, I
 " beseech you, pure *self-interest* one question;
 " Have you no concern in *this Death*? *Is it no-*
 " *thing to you?*—Oh! much, very much! it can-
 " not stand neuter. It is big with good or ill. It
 " must hasten your amendment; or heighten your
 " offence. Henceforth, the *same* crimes are seven-
 " fold guilt.

" Have you never consulted the workings of na-
 " ture? Have you never been *surprized* with a se-
 " rious feeling of heart? When I stand, though a
 " stranger, on the verge of another's grave; when
 " I see the shaken mould take possession of human
 " pride; and hear the solemn sound of *dust to dust*.

" what swelling of soul, but instantly subsides;
 " what salutary thoughts, but, at once, it inspires?
 " The grave of one unknown, and dying a *com-*
 " *mon* death, would have this effect: what then,
 " the grave of a friend, and of our *own* character;
 " and that not good; and dying of the follies in
 " which *we* live; and with admonitions in his
 " mouth, and horrors in his heart? What heart
 " impregnable to such an assault? what thunder
 " equal to such a groan? It would echo for ever
 " in a penetrable ear. In a penetrable heart there
 " would be wrought a mighty change.

" For see you not the mighty force that is im-
 " plied in this mercy? Heaven trusts not to your
 " faith; but gives *sensible* proof of what you have
 " to fear. And could it do more? Would a
 " miracle suffice?—You have it in a mercy so
 " little deserved. If danger can alarm you, you,
 " *now*, are alarmed. If nothing can alarm you,
 " nothing can save.

" I should grieve to have said too much. Yet,
 " have I said too much, if my words serve only to
 " render more inexcusable that imprudence, which
 " they labour to remove. Rather know your dan-
 " ger, and embrace the plank (tho' not of cedar)
 " which I throw out for your escape. Our fond-
 " nefs for good, shuts our eyes on evil; we scarce
 " allow it existence before it is felt. But, remem-
 " ber, we live in a most mutable scene: and have
 " the fear of to-morrow before your eyes. Not
 " the keenest discernment can ken through the se-
 " cond of a minute. To keep within the reach

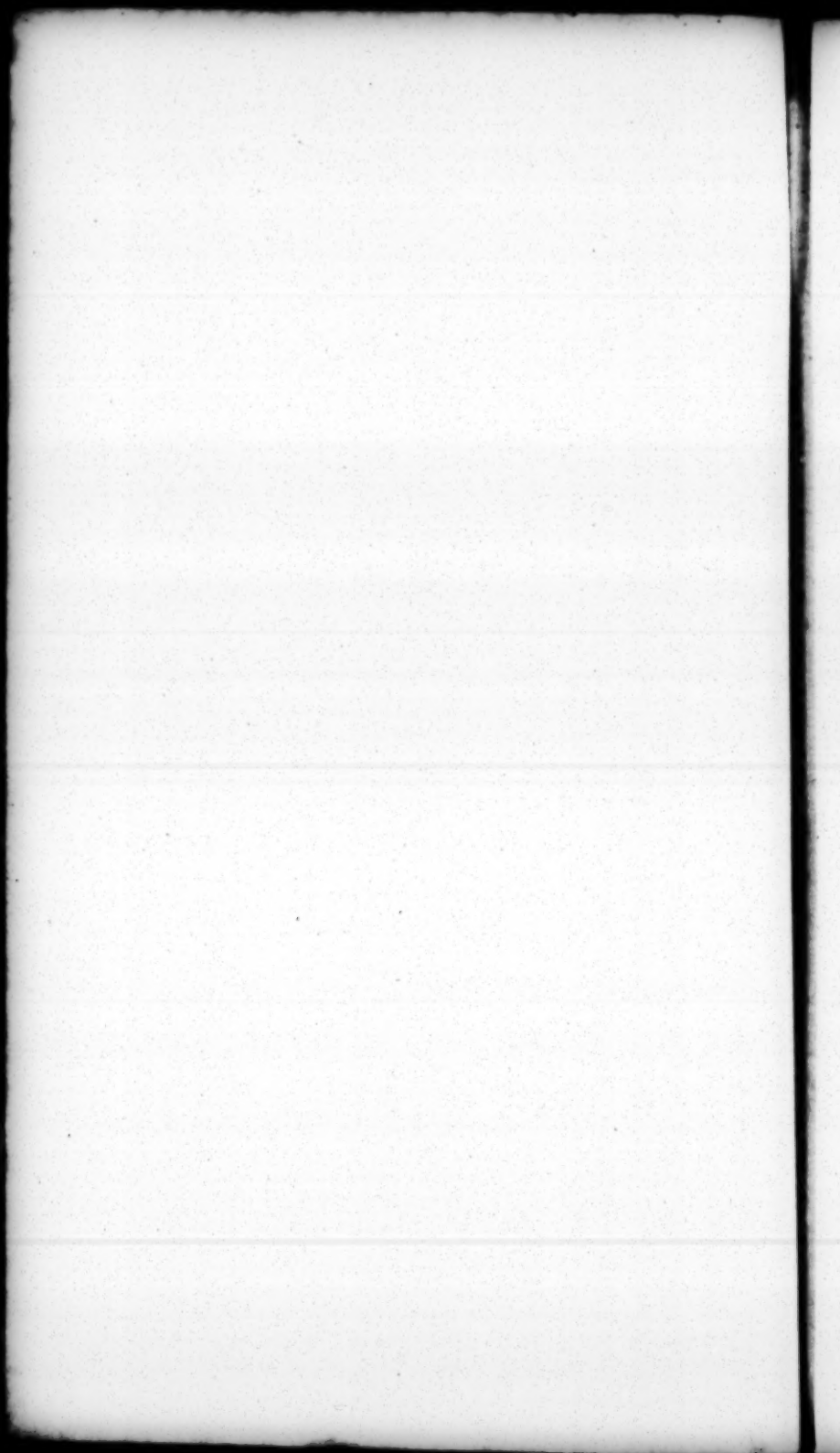
"of mercy, is the grand concern, and supreme
"blessing of human life.

"My *converted!* or *condemned!*

"farewell."

Thus, dear Sir, I speak to these gentlemen. I wish they do not rather chuse to show their parts, than their penitence; and criticise my *speech*, instead of their own conduct. If so, they demonstrate how very great occasion there was of *it*; though it proves ineffectual.

Most Yours.



L E T T E R I V.

O N

P L E A S U R E.

DEAR SIR,

YOU seem to think, in your last letter, that our age is so far gone, as to be past recovery. I hope not. *Aviola*, a consul in the time of *Gordian*, revived on his funeral pile. I will not despair, but that *British* virtue, now, like the *Phoenix*, dying in its *sweets*, may start up from its ashes, and re-assume its former glory. I shall therefore proceed a little farther.

I grant, that the *man of pleasure*, as well as the good man, has his joy. But their joys are very different. They differ not only in their objects, but their kind; which is as yet a secret to *them*; and, possibly, to you. Joy from temporals, is a terrestrial joy. And, like all things terrestrial, has a dreg in it. If you observe your own heart, you will find, that joy from temporals has ever somewhat of a gay inquietude, a disturbed and tumultuous delight. Like some liquors, all in an unquiet ferment, and confusion, while they sparkle, and smile. Joy from eternals, joy, I mean, on spiritual accounts (*viz.*) *Mens conscia recti*; or, a delightful hope of immortality; or, an humble persuasion of divine favour, &c. this joy is ce-

lestial, and, like a fine calm summer's evening, is undisturbed, placid, and serene. The first is a *passion*, and that in the strictest sense; we *suffer* from it, as well as *enjoy*. Nay, some have suffered from it even to death. The latter seems to be, or to resemble, an *inspiration*, in which the divine cause takes away, or supercedes, our human infirmity. Therefore, by our church, most properly styled the *peace of God*. Nor let *Centaurs* imagine, that this peace is occasioned by the smallness of the joy. No, *It passeth all understanding*; and is, strictly speaking, a specimen, an actual part, of heaven.

For, indeed, the *supreme* happiness, and misery, of rational beings, through all variation of circumstances, and through every period of their existence, is of a piece, or of the same kind. Tho' perhaps, in no two periods of it, of the same proportion, or degree. Therefore, 'heaven and hell, how distant soever some think them, are *really*, though not *fully*, on earth. Wherever, and whenever, their causes, that is, virtue and vice, exist, they will exist, in a measure correspondent to them. What then are the *good* and *bad*, but the wretched and happy? He, whose soul reposes on his firm trust in God, like the halcyon that builds on the waves, if storms arise, may be tossed, but not endangered. Or, grant the worst, those tumultuous billows that devour others, rock him to rest eternal.

When the good man lies down to rest, no fears from the dangers of the night break through his

strong confidence in the divine protection. When he awakes, his first thought lays hold on heaven; which gives through the consecrated day, such a sweetness of aspect and deportment, such a force and firmness, to his felicity; that we may venture almost to say, *He cometh forth as a bridegroom from his chamber, and rejoiceth, as a giant to run his course.*

The *man of pleasure* has his little clouds at the brightest, the course of his happiness is retarded by a straw; and any considerable, scarce considerable, accident puts it quite to death. Not only the necessities, or conveniencies, but the decorations, and superfluities of life, are *vital* to his sickly felicity. In any of them he may receive a deep or deadly wound. Whereas they are more excrescences to the good man's happiness; and he has no more feeling in them than in his hair, or his nail: nay, his happiness is of so strong a constitution, that it can stand *real* calamities unhurt. Nor quits its *serenity* on the confines of the grave; which the man of pleasure but ill retains in the sunshine of life.

Of which strange inferiority one cause is very obvious. When all our hopes and fears are confined within this narrow scene, what an insupportable importance, what a tyranny over our passions does this give it? what demigods does it make our superiors, who can bestow what we *most* value? We tremble before them. What mountains does it make of little things, because the greatest in *our* inventory? we turn pale, sometimes die at their

loss. But, the first moment we take God for our protector, and his precious promises for our chief portion, our superiors, even kings, shrink to men; and crowns imperial lose their lustre. Little things are little, and leave our hearts at rest. As a taper to the sun; such the sun to the *glories which shall be revealed*. Looking to the close of the drama, we resume our native dignity; nor are longer over-awed on the stage, by our fellows; or, perhaps, our inferiors, *behind* the scene. Nay, sometimes, *on* it too. When, like poor *Altamont*, they are forced to change their plume for the warm cap of sickness; and are unbuttoning their buskins on the bed of anguish, terror, and death.

And must this, one day, be the case? after having run the gauntlet of disappointing, painful pleasures; and, for some years, being afflicted with delights; to drop unregarded, unlamented, infamous, into punishment far greater, *for* the punishment they have already undergone—Of human happiness what a dismal account is this? yet this is the true. Let us, therefore, enquire if it is not worse than *they* deserve.

Our *men of pleasure* affect much being *men of honour* too; that is, they are as proud, as they are dissolute: or, in other words, they will not stoop to mean and little vices; they deal only in great. They scorn to pick a pocket; but triumph in cutting a throat. If their immaculate *honour* is violated by word, look, or thought, then they trample all the laws of religion, justice, and humanity without remorse. My *enquiry* will join



the man of honour, and the man of pleasure together. But how shall I enquire? how shall I know the heart of these men? and that only can inform me right. Let us then consider what these mens *prayer* would be, if they prayed at all. For what is a prayer, but addressing to some superior power, the real desires of our hearts?

Thus then I will shew you an exact picture of their hearts. There was so masterly a copy of a capital picture of *Julio Romano*, taken by one of his scholars, that he swore it was his own original drawing. I hope so to copy their hearts, that they shall imagine, that it is not I, but themselves, that speak. The desires of their hearts, if cloathed in words, would run to the following purpose. —But, *first*, this caution: let not that offend pious ears, which passes in an impious heart; and which, for the sake of *piety* (though, perhaps, not without some shock to it), is drawn out into light.

The PROFLIGATE'S PRAYER.

“ **O** Thou! whose omnipotence is but a *second*
 “ attribute, an able servant to thy de-
 “ light. Thou great fountain of *pleasure*! as such
 “ I adore thee. Pleasure alone makes me devout;
 “ and let devotion advance my pleasure. For I
 “ am not more devout than modest; I ask not,
 “ yet, for heaven. Give me my heaven on earth.
 “ Let *Mahomet's* paradise descend, and bless me
 “ on this side the grave. Let my *honour* too shine
 “ before men; and let none see my heart,—but

“ Thee. *Noctem peccatis, et fraudibus objice nu-*
 “ *bem.* Give my lusts a long and prosperous reign
 “ over me; and let not religion approach to hurt
 “ me. Lead me into temptation, and give me
 “ strength to comply with it. And deliver me
 “ from all evil, that may mar my delights. Let
 “ me be (as I have been) a brute while I live, and
 “ an angel (if angels there are) when I die.”

Is the good man shocked at this? Yes; and the profligate too. Few know the foulness of their own hearts. A famous modern, when, in age he had lost his understanding, passing by a looking-glass, cry'd out in compassion, “ *Poor old man!*” not knowing it to be himself. Thus the profligate, at sight of this mirror, equally ignorant, no doubt, will cry out in surprize, “ *Horrid wretch!*” I answer, therefore, to the question above, *viz.* *Is it not worse than they deserve?* That *men of pleasure*, themselves being judges, deserve the worst.

In contrast to this (and sure it wants an antidote), accept that Piece of Devotion you desired on your friend's account; and may it prove of some little service to him.

Devout THOUGHTS of the retired PENITENT.

‘ Y E S, blessed, ever blessed be the divine in-
 ‘ dulgence for this. How wanted, how
 ‘ welcome, this asylum? this recess? Here earth
 ‘ holds its peace; and Heaven's voice can be heard.
 ‘ Heaven's voice, if we listen, ever speaking in the
 ‘ human heart. Here let me commune with my

' so long-anxious heart, which has frequently call'd
 ' on me for an audience, and found me pre-engaged.
 ' Or else, the rude world broke in on our confe-
 ' rence, and fatally push'd it off 'till a farther day.
 ' Though (shocking to consider!) a depending eter-
 ' nity often chid my delay.

' While the noise of the world beats its drum in
 ' our ears, and its bustle and hurry throws its dust
 ' in our eyes, who can hear the soft whispers of con-
 ' science, or read the strong demands of reason, tho'
 ' written in capitals, on the composed and disen-
 ' charmed heart? I now read, hear, and tremble.
 ' I tremble at that, in which I once triumphed.
 ' I blush at that of which I once was vain. Oh,
 ' *Pleasure! Pleasure!* what art thou? The death
 ' of reason. And with reason dies the whole hea-
 ' ven, as well as character, of man.

' The cloud now a little broken, which wrap-
 ' ped me up in night, look round, my soul enlarged!
 ' and say, where, or what am I? An immensity a-
 ' round me! an eternity before me! a shadow,
 ' my pleasure! a moment, my time! a vapor, my
 ' life! And shall a moment, shade, vapor, en-
 ' gage all my love? engross all my thought? Shall
 ' it bid an angel from heaven wait my better lei-
 ' sure? bid the great Father of angels defer his call
 ' 'till to-morrow?—What, O my soul! if he should
 ' call no more!—Good God! If he should call no
 ' more! If He should leave thee to thyself!—Where,
 ' then, is hope? where, then, is man?

' Man, desperate man, the first moment he sets
 ' up for himself, and impatient of controul, takes

' the rein into his own mad hands; the first mo-
 ' ment he is at liberty, he is the greatest of slaves.
 ' How shackled! how harra's'd! how starv'd! In
 ' the midst of his riots, what a famine of joy?
 ' None can be wise for time, that are fools for
 ' eternity. Dreadful independence! the first mo-
 ' ment man quits hold of his Creator, he drops, in
 ' distraction and ruin! how unfathom'd his fall!

' Out of that deep, I call unto thee, O LORD!
 ' LORD, hear my voice. Dissolve the charm that
 ' ties me down to delights trifling, terrestrial, in-
 ' fernal; and give me wings to rise into day, and
 ' reach the things that belong to my peace.
 ' Where is the creature which thou hast made?
 ' Where is the heart, which thou hast given? This
 ' sink of pollution! this nest of all vices! it could
 ' not come from thee. No, I have snatched it
 ' out of thy blessed hand, and let it fall in the mire.
 ' What is it to me, that *thy mercy is over all thy*
 ' *works*, since I am *not* what thou hast made?

' I have slept on a precipice, and dreamed I was
 ' in heaven. Slept on its very brink; though ven-
 ' geance frowned over me, and flames roared
 ' beneath. What horrors awake me! what a gulph
 ' lyes before me! what mercy has saved me! Where
 ' had I been, had I died yesterday? Oh, let this
 ' load, this mountainous load, on my heart, sink
 ' me lower, and lower still, in adoration that I
 ' live! Had I felt *these* pangs before — before I had
 ' been reclaimed.—Thou that bearest up the pil-
 ' lars of the earth, support my spirits!—Where
 ' had I been, if yesterday had been my last? Where

‘ —oh where?—And eternal too!—*Eternal!*—
 ‘ O LORD, GOD ALMIGHTY! could thy thunder
 ‘ shake me more?

‘ Thou glorious GOD, who makest the thunder!
 ‘ let me climb above creation; and soar into
 ‘ thoughts of thee.—How I wander up and down,
 ‘ bewildered and benighted, through the *boundless*
 ‘ of such a contemplation? Where, what, who,
 ‘ how, art thou? Source of all being! Centre of all
 ‘ good! great Antient of days! before the birth of
 ‘ time! beyond the comprehension of angels! filler
 ‘ of immensity! who lookest down on the highest,
 ‘ and the lowest dost support!—support even me.

‘ Support me while I labour at some idea of my
 ‘ GOD—but I labour in vain. Thou most obvious,
 ‘ and most occult! most present, and most absent of
 ‘ beings! how much of thee is *enjoyed*? how little
 ‘ of thee is *known*? I am *in* thee, yet cannot find
 ‘ thee. I can neither go from thee, nor to thee.
 ‘ Clouds, and thick darkness are thy pavilion!
 ‘ Wonders passing wonders, through the moment
 ‘ of *time*, and the immense of *eternity*, guard, and
 ‘ aggrandize thy tremendous throne!

‘ Before *such* a judge, O my soul! art thou to
 ‘ plead thy cause; to pour out thy deep sorrows,
 ‘ and deeper sins; to tremble out thy complaint?
 ‘ Oh! let me annihilate myself before him. Nor
 ‘ *wretch*, nor *man*, nor *angel*, is any thing in his
 ‘ sight, till he is nothing in his own. Who, LORD!
 ‘ ever thought on thee, and was not confounded?
 ‘ And give me leave to add, who, LORD! ever
 ‘ prayed to thee (as he ought), and was not blessed?

‘ For which infinite mercy, from the first thrones in
 ‘ heaven, to the meanest worm on earth, be paid
 ‘ all homage, praise, and adoration; constant, pro-
 ‘ found, ardent, and eternal!’

P A R T. II.

‘ Are they that pray, blessed?—But what is that
 ‘ to me? Dare I, to pray? to whom is prayer ad-
 ‘ dressed? Oh! how dreadful in Majesty! more
 ‘ dreadful in vengeance! dreadful to the blessed a-
 ‘ bove! more dreadful to man! more still to the
 ‘ sinner! what then to the deepest in sin? May not I
 ‘ then say (as is said, LORD GOD ALMIGHTY, of thy
 ‘ Blessed Self), *Hell is open before me; destruction*
 ‘ *hath no covering?* Where then shall I fly? I can-
 ‘ not fly from thy presence. I dare not stand in it.
 ‘ Should I sink to the centre, I am still in thy sight.
 ‘ Even darkness detects me! even flight brings me
 ‘ nigh! Oh! Thou that dost light the sun, as a ta-
 ‘ per; or tread it out, as a spark! Why *still* in be-
 ‘ ing, a wretch ever destined to pain? Oh! let me
 ‘ be nothing; or let me be thine.

‘ And what a nothing, indeed, am I? What a
 ‘ nothing, compared, is man?—Thou that inhabi-
 ‘ test eternity! my foundation is in the dust. LORD
 ‘ most holy! I was conceived in sin. GOD most
 ‘ mighty! what weaker than man? Great! Holy!
 ‘ Mighty! Three persons and one GOD! Creator!
 ‘ Redeemer! Sanctifier! three benefactors, and
 ‘ one being! with what indignation must thou
 ‘ behold a wretch of such complicated guilt? a sin-
 ‘ ner to thee, to the public, and himself?

' And dare I then approach? The presumption
 ' how great?—But greater to forbear. To sin is
 ' bad: to despair is fatal. Oh! most merciful
 ' JESUS! what refuge, but in thee! Yet dare I
 ' not meet thy face: I come trembling behind thee.
 ' If I touch but the hem of thy garment, I shall
 ' be whole Even dogs may eat of the crumbs
 ' that fall from their master's table.—For that
 ' bountiful grant, what adoration is due? with pro-
 ' stration profound, I cannot but adore.—What a-
 ' doration is equal? I cannot adore aright. Or
 ' could I; I'm unworthy to lift an eye to thy
 ' throne. *My* incense has no odor; *my* anthem,
 ' no praise.

' But thou, LORD, wide as the arch of Heaven,
 ' dost extend thy compassionate arms to receive a
 ' returning world. As the sands of the sea are thy
 ' mercies, and (with horror let me speak it) *my*
 ' transgressions. I have looked on an unfeeling
 ' heart, as a quiet conscience: on a multitude of
 ' sinners, as an apology for sin: and on the fashion
 ' of the world, as a repeal of thy laws. I have
 ' been thankless, for what thou hast most bounti-
 ' fully given: senseless, of what thou hast more
 ' bountifully promised: provoking, under the
 ' greatest obligations: peevish, and impatient, under
 ' the smallest evils: riotous under thy judgments:
 ' and by thy blessings, most unblest: I turned
 ' them into poison; and by my prosperity was un-
 ' done.

' I have studied iniquity as a science: been vain
 ' of distinction in it; and ashamed of my duty: I

' have blushed at the glance of a man, and a man
 ' most mistaken ; and set my face as a flint against
 ' reason, and against thee : I have even borrowed
 ' infidel scraps for the credit of the day ; and run
 ' in debt for destruction : time given for repentance,
 ' I turned over to folly ; and made the divine mercy
 ' a promoter of sin. Nay, I have sinned even be-
 ' yond my power. What schemes have I laid, which
 ' thy goodness disappointed ? How many crimes
 ' have I committed, which never came to pass ?

' With such overflowings of ungodliness I quenched
 ' thy blessed Spirit. I have trod, with thy divine
 ' laws, thy precious blood, under foot. All this,
 ' LORD ! thou knowest ; and yet I still live :
 ' all this thou hast seen ; and yet hast thou held
 ' thy peace. Thou hast shortened thine arm ; and
 ' curbed vengeance in air ; though called for (if
 ' daring *can* call for thy vengeance) to fall on my
 ' head.

' How long, LORD ! hast Thou forborne me ?
 ' And forborne when thine arrows went abroad :
 ' though I stood in the first rank of offenders ; nor
 ' ever lifted up the shield of devotion ; quite naked
 ' in sin. My less vitious companions fell frequent
 ' around me ; and dismal was their fall. I washed
 ' off its memory in the next welcome debauch ; and
 ' the just cause of remorse but redoubled my guilt.
 ' By admonitions unadmonished, by thy mercies un-
 ' softened, by my own sentiments unawed, by my
 ' own conviction unconvinced, I censured their con-
 ' duct, and trod on in their steps. I deplored their
 ' sad exit, and posted on to my own ; because spared,

' when most obnoxious, I thought myself immortal.
 ' In every path of pleasure, in every flight of am-
 ' bition, what gay, sanguine multitudes of those
 ' born after me, and in every promise of life to be
 ' placed before me, have I seen rise, bloom, triumph,
 ' languish, decay and die? What a mystery of mercy
 ' is this? And what a miracle of madness am I?
 ' Amid this mighty field of slaughter, am I still a-
 ' live?—While I doubt if I still live, I live on in
 ' my crimes. Nay, my very repentance increases
 ' the number. Repentance so languid; so far short
 ' of my guilt!

P A R T III.

' LORD! from that stupendous height, towards
 ' which the Cherubims lift up an eye in vain, bow
 ' down thine ear and hear.—O LORD! hear me
 ' not. For what have I to plead? what excuse to
 ' cover, what palliation to soften my guilt? Can
 ' my confession of sin weigh aught in my favour?
 ' I fear, not a grain: for wherefore have I con-
 ' fessed my transgressions? because I could not con-
 ' ceal them. Thou knowest even those, that are
 ' unknown to myself. But then, LORD! I have
 ' been tempted.—Yes; and I have courted temp-
 ' tation. Frail nature has seduced me.—And
 ' have I not indulged my seducer? Public example
 ' bore hard on me—And I rejoiced in that ex-
 ' cuse. I have sinned with my fathers.—True,
 ' but I have sinned beyond them. What age for
 ' indulgence has so loosened the rein? and who, in

‘ such an age, has rushed farther in ill, than the
‘ wretch at thy feet ?

‘ But is there nothing in counterbalance ? no
‘ dawnings of good ? no pretensions, at least, to
‘ virtue, to lighten the loaded scale ? Yes ; I have
‘ been an advocate for virtue—That I might re-
‘ move all obstructions in vice. I have gone to thy
‘ temple—But left my heart behind. Nay, I have
‘ prayed—But wished not what I asked. I have
‘ aimed at humility—Out of pride. I have given
‘ —But without charity. I have been kind, the
‘ very kindest of men—To gain power of being
‘ cruel, as the most malignant of foes. My devo-
‘ tion to Thee has been absolutely declined ; yet
‘ never have I repented, but of *omissions* in guilt :
‘ nor ever had a *darling* joy, but what is the pa-
‘ rent of my *present* grief.

‘ On searching my own heart, that abyfs of
‘ corruption, I find there is hardly a virtue which
‘ my hypocrisy has not worn, as a mask ; hardly a
‘ vice which my presumption has not acted un-
‘ der it. By these abandoned means bringing into
‘ discredit virtue of others the most sincere ; and ma-
‘ king more heinous my own deepest guilt : to the
‘ public a scarce less pernicious pest, than a fatal
‘ assassin to myself. Thus, Lord ! all my pleas
‘ but inflame my indictment ; and seeking excuses,
‘ but discovers new crimes.

‘ But, as I discover new crimes in myself by my
‘ awakened reflection ; by the gift of thy grace,
‘ I discover new goodness, new glories, new won-
‘ ders, in Thee, I have lived in darkness, in the

' shadows of eternal death. I wrapped myself up
 ' in the world. I saw nothing; but what had been
 ' better unseen, what made me blind to Thee.
 ' But now thy divine attributes break in upon me,
 ' like the morning; and awake me to thy presence.
 ' I see Thee in every thing. And seeing, I adore.
 ' And adoring, tremble.

' Thine attributes, at once, all lighten upon me;
 ' and strike me, like him of *Tarsus*, thy less perse-
 ' cuting foe; they strike me to the dust. Thy most
 ' awful omnipresence; thy most incomprehensible
 ' glory; thy most unbounded wisdom; exquisite ju-
 ' stice; and ineffable goodness! goodness, how in-
 ' effable? And to me, LORD! to *me* insupportable.
 ' That chief cause of my confusion! severe upbraider
 ' of my conduct! and terrible aggravation of my
 ' guilt! If thy goodness thus pains me; what then
 ' will thy vengeance? When thy vengeance awakes
 ' (cover me, O ye mountains!) when thy vengeance
 ' awakes—Oh! mercy! mercy! mercy!—Thou
 ' mighty to save! Oh! have mercy upon me!

' And mercy thou wilt have, thou Father of all
 ' mercies! of mercy redundant, inexhaustible source!
 ' Thou wilt not condemn him, who condemns him-
 ' self; who trembles at his own tribunal; who is
 ' scarce struck with more horror at vengeance, than
 ' at guilt. At *such* guilt! and to *such* a Master!
 ' whose bounties enabled me so signally to sin; and
 ' who, my sin so provoking, so long over-looked.

' But I repent. LORD! I repent—Yet how
 ' dry are these eyes? how hard is this heart?
 ' Strike thou the rock, and the waters flow. Let

' not him, who groans under his transgressions,
 ' groan under thy displeasure. Thou giver, guider,
 ' lover, yea, buyer, of souls! and, at what a price?
 ' who dost hear the very thoughts of the wound-
 ' ed at heart? hear, pity, spare! Nor let the
 ' LORD be angry, if I presume to add —Oh! spare
 ' thy paternal tenderness; oh save it from its a-
 ' version; its *strange work*. Vengeance is an alien
 ' to thy most amiable nature. Ruin is a subver-
 ' sion of thy most glorious scheme.

' Though common sense has deserted me; and a
 ' *legion* possessed me; though I have contradicted
 ' my own reason; and fought my own heart, which
 ' stood in defence of thy laws; tho' I have strug-
 ' gled hard for madness; and taken ruin by force;
 ' yet let not compassion be quite a stranger in hea-
 ' ven. Let not thine anger burn for ever. Where-
 ' fore is the LORD angry? Because I am a sinner?
 ' What else canst thou forgive? Because my sin is
 ' great? If pardoned, the greater thy glory. Thy
 ' servant is wicked: but still a servant. Thy son
 ' a prodigal: but still a son. Tho' a son's duty
 ' has been wanting in me; lose not Thou, bound-
 ' less Love! *all* the bowels of a father. Am not I
 ' the work of thy hand? Do not despise it. An
 ' image of thy majesty? Do not blot it out. The
 ' price of thy blood! Oh! cast it not away. Shall
 ' things incompatible combine to my destruction?
 ' Can I be related to ruin, and to Thee? Let it
 ' be thy blessed pleasure to reclaim, not to destroy
 ' me: if destroyed, thy foe will triumph: if re-
 ' claimed, there is joy in heaven; and ~~ten~~ times
 ' ten thousand will sing praise round thy throne.'

P A R T IV.

' But if I am pardoned, who then can be punish-
 ' ed? What stains can condemn, if an *Aethiop*
 ' escapes? The regions of darkness are part of
 ' thy creation; and horrors infernal were not
 ' made in vain. My crimes, in themselves, how
 ' great? as committed in defiance of *Infinite Ma-*
 ' *jesty*, they are greater still. What then shall I
 ' say? To what shadow of excuse shall I fly?—
 ' Pardon, LORD! the weakness of my reason, if
 ' I judge, or rather hope, amiss: thine *Infinite*
 ' *Majesty*, seems to plead *for* me. Fain would I
 ' find an advocate in *that*; in that very cause,
 ' which most heightens my guilt.

' For what, my LORD! am I? a poor complex
 ' of littleness and vanity; the very centre of infir-
 ' mities; a combination of all causes, that can call
 ' for thy compassion. Frail flesh, and fleeting spi-
 ' rit! a moth! a worm! a flower of the field! to-day,
 ' and not to-morrow! at morning, and not at night!
 ' not master of a moment; not a match for a
 ' breeze! a dream! a vapour! a shadow! a thing of
 ' nought! posting through daily doubt and danger,
 ' toil and trouble, into trodden dust and ashes!

' Such am I! such was I made;—and made by
 ' Thee: and now, LORD! wilt Thou make bare
 ' an arm almighty against me? wilt thou lift up
 ' a bolt, that can crush creation, against its mean-
 ' est worm? (Oh! pardon what distress compels
 ' me to plead) thine *Infinite Majesty* declares a-
 ' gainst it; that rescues the sinner, though it en-

‘ hances the sin. Does not my meanness disarm
 ‘ thy might? Is not the greatness of the offend-
 ‘ ed, the offender’s defence? I am, indeed, un-
 ‘ worthy, most unworthy, thy favour: but am I
 ‘ not unworthy thy resentment too? Thou that
 ‘ fittest on the highest heavens, and seest worlds
 ‘ infinite dance beneath thee, as atoms in the sun!—
 ‘ Wilt Thou, oh! wilt Thou, not remember, that
 ‘ I am but dust?

‘ Yes, LORD! Thou wilt remember it: thou
 ‘ wilt remember thy glorious self; what antient
 ‘ days resound; what wonders love divine has
 ‘ wrought of old. For to whom do I cry? art
 ‘ thou not he, to whom none ever cried in vain?
 ‘ who created not, but to bless: commands not,
 ‘ but to preserve: nor punishes, but to reclaim.
 ‘ Who has not more relieved, than amazed, with
 ‘ his extremities of love! for, art thou not the same
 ‘ LORD, who, though most offended, as if thou
 ‘ wert the offender, beseeches *us* to be reconciled?
 ‘ Who mourns over the impenitent? and over the
 ‘ impenitent for sins against himself? and when his
 ‘ sorrow cannot prevail, even weeps in their stead?
 ‘ Those tears obdurate *Jerusalem* would not shed,
 ‘ didst thou not take to thy own blessed lids, which
 ‘ overflowed at the bare prospect of its ruin? Who,
 ‘ without pious terror, without the greatest asto-
 ‘ nishment, can think on these things? or, who,
 ‘ without comfort, still greater than *that*?

‘ Nor end our healing hopes of comfort here; not
 ‘ only to beseech, commiserate, and weep, descend-
 ‘ ed the LORD of glory, and eternal life, but to

' die. And *what* a death? and after, *what* a life?
 ' A life of compassions, without number, and be-
 ' yond measure: what a shining progress, what a
 ' stupendous ascent in love? *He* meets the return-
 ' ing prodigal: looks compassion on denying *Peter*:
 ' Rejects not disbelieving *Thomas*: admits sinful
 ' *Magdalen*: pardons the taken adulteress: and as-
 ' sociates to himself, in paradise (where angels cast
 ' their crowns at his feet), a thief from the cross.
 ' What a marvellous and most adorable climax is
 ' this? and is it possible for love to rise higher still?
 ' Oh! let it rise higher, and reach even me.

' What am I, Thou most exuberant fountain of
 ' love! that I should set a bound to such compassion
 ' as this? Can *ocean* be repelled by a single grain on
 ' the shore? What a triumph of mercy, to pluck
 ' the ruined from ruin? What an *omnipotent* action,
 ' to save the most lost? tho' pleasure has fool'd me;
 ' tho' reason, conscience, heav'n, nay and earth too,
 ' in one scale, has been outweighed by a feather in
 ' the other; tho', with *Esau*, I sold my birthright
 ' for nothing; yet, LORD! let these distractions of
 ' thought, these convulsions of heart, these pangs of
 ' the wretch, if not the prayer of the penitent,
 ' reach the foot of thy throne: for his dear sake,
 ' who spared not his most precious blood; oh! spare,
 ' pardon, bless; yes, bless me, even me, O my *Fa-*
 ' *ther*! yes, thou all surrounding, all-pervading,
 ' all-sustaining, and all-blessing Majesty of Heaven!
 ' bless me, even me, O my God!

' *Thou*! who if thou movest thy lip, it thun-
 ' ders: if thou liftest thine eye, the sun is dark: who

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‘hast thy way in the whirlwind, and walkest on the
 ‘wings of the wind; who sittest above the heavens,
 ‘and hidest thy footsteps in the great deep! but
 ‘(above all) whose superabundant effluence, whose
 ‘ocean of love, overflows the whole creation! add
 ‘to these wonders one wonder more—the for-
 ‘giveness of guilt like mine: Hear the suppliant
 ‘voice, see the bleeding bosom, these throws, these
 ‘throbs of the most vile and abandoned—but most
 ‘repentant, and heart-broken, of men.

‘*Then, LORD! come the worst, I will not com-
 ‘plain. My joy shall burst its way through the
 ‘frowns of the world; and the shadows of death.
 ‘Then—Blessings and honour, and glory, and power,
 ‘be to Him who sitteth on the throne, and to the
 ‘Lamb, who nails sin to his cross!—Thus will I sing
 ‘in spite of my groans! thus will I sing with my last
 ‘expiring breath! thus will I sing for ever, and ever.
 ‘Amen. O my soul! Amen, Amen.’*

This, Sir, is that importunate, ardent, persevering spirit of address, which was suitable to the state of the person from whom I borrowed it. It may possibly (partly at least) suit some others. And I thought it inhuman, to gaze, so long as I have done, on the disease, without aiming at some expedient to mitigate its malignity. There is a sovereign balm in prayer.

I know, Sir, there are certain quietists in Devotion, saints of great repose in prayer, who may censure this, as too warm. But when should we be warm, if not when our eternity is at stake? Shall

we be warm in our vices? and cool in our repentance? were our passions given for nothing? or given only as the servants of sin? Is it not heaven, but its reverse, that is to be taken by violence? I, therefore, drop this dispute. not only as *unchristian*, but *undeistical* too: For, if there is a GOD, all our affections are too feeble, all the wings of our soul are too few, to be put forth in pursuit of his favour; and being languid in devotion, is being solemnly undevout. If there is a GOD, he gave us our passions, as well as our reason; they, therefore, as well as reason, should assist in his service. And, indeed, reason without them, tho' it may loudly tell, will but lamely perform, our duty. How great a part of the scripture must these men's kind of criticism explode? Poor *David* must break his harp, lest it give offence. Even angels have their passions; nor are any beings exempt from the *need* of them on this side the throne of GOD. Whatever exemption some may fancy in their own favour, let us, my friend, who have seen the necessity of devotion for others, not neglect our own. Nor in the pride of instructing, lose the prudence of safety.

You, and I, my friend! ly under two disadvantages in this point: the world's example, and our own years. It is an undevout age: and will you not be surprized to hear me say, that ours is an undevout period of life?—Yet it is most certain, that there is a tenderness of heart, and a susceptibility of awe, with regard to GOD, as well as man, in youth, which, in most, is wanting afterwards. This want is an enemy we must fight; and fervent prayer,

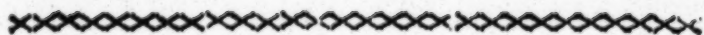
that *sword of the spirit*, is the best weapon against him. Prayer, because the most easy of duties, seems, with many, the hardest to be performed. It costs them so little pains, they think they may as well let it alone. Whereas, it is the supreme, the great, mother-duty; all other duties, and virtues, are its progeny; are brought forth, nursed, nourished, and sustained by it. Devotion is the sole asylum of human frailty, and sole support of heavenly perfection: It is the golden chain of union between heaven and earth; keeps open the blessed communion;

—*Geminig; facit commercia regni.* CLAUD.

He that has never prayed, can never *conceive*, and he that has prayed as he ought, can never *forget*, how much is to be gained by prayer.

Dear Sir,

Yours.

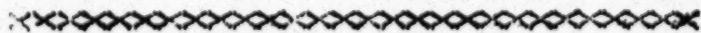


L E T T E R V.

LIFE'S REVIEW.

The GENERAL CAUSE of SECURITY in
SIN.

THOUGHTS for AGE.



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LETTER V.

LIFE'S REVIEW.

DEAR SIR,

IN this and the following Letter I shall touch on five points: *Life's Review*: the *General Cause of Security in Sin*: *Thoughts for Age*: the *Dignity of Man*: the *Centaur's Restoration to Humanity*. The three first are naturally suggested to me by the world's wickedness, and our own; and our advanced time of life. The fourth, viz. the *Dignity of Man*, is naturally suggested by the notoriety of its reverse in those, for whose sake these Letters are principally written. For who can look on *Lucifer* in his abyss, without thinking of that height from which he fell? by which alone we can take any just measure of his calamity. And the fifth point, viz. the *Centaur's Restoration to Humanity*, is forceably imposed on me by the transporting thought, that *such* an event is possible. Yet, should it take place, posterity will scarce believe it: *Annalium nostrorum laborabit fides*. L. FLO.

I begin with the *Review of Life*; and that, though chiefly for our own sakes, yet also for the sake of all our grey-headed boys, as *Sudbury*, *Torrismond*, *Ironsides*, &c For though beasts of so gross a class as they chuse to rank with, scarce deserve

to be brought to the manage, yet pupils not yet expell'd the school of life, ought still, if possible, to be taught the lesson they have so long neglected : and I offer myself gladly for their tutor ; though I fear they would prefer a *tetanoltrum* * to an *apothecosis*. Their erudition will not leave them at a loss to know what I mean.

There is nothing of which men are more liberal than their good advice, be their stock of it ever so small ; because it seems to carry in it an intimation of our own influence, importance, or worth. We (for you approved it ; *we*, I say) have bestowed abundance of it on our Centaurs, which I fear will bring us in but little thanks. Let us, therefore, return from abroad, come to ourselves ; and see if our export of wisdom may not be wanted at home. We have censured the aged ; are we not such ourselves ? Is there no folly to be found, but at assemblies and masquerades ? or is folly not folly, because it hits our own taste ? Let us lay the line to our own conduct : let us drop foreign ware, and put ourselves into the scale.

Yes, my friend ! let us make a short visit to our former selves. They are, indeed, great strangers ; nor much to be liked : yet is it a visit all should make who wish well to the future of life. A *Review of Life* is an employment agreeable but to few ; because none *can* look back without self-condemnation ; and none *will* look forward but with self-flattery. But though the task may be bitter, it is wholesome too. Ask you,

* A medicine to take out wrinkles.

"What advantage from it?"—It is the only way of taking my Centaur's * advice, and *knowing ourselves*. A man can see himself in retrospection only. When warm in action, he is ever looking on something else; on his point in view: or, if he could see himself, he could not judge aright, either of himself or others. While warm in action, prejudices and passions, excited by the *then* present objects and incidents, corrupt his judgment. But in a cool review, he becomes rather a *by-stander*, than the *party*; and is patient of truth. His *then* former rivals are no longer rivals; therefore he judges better of *men*. His former points of view are no longer points of view; therefore he judges better of *things*. He can judge, nay he cannot but judge, as impartially of himself, as of the rest of mankind.

Wisdom is the growth of experience: but experience is not the growth of action, but of reflection on it. In an active life is *sown* the seed of wisdom; but he, who reflects not, never *reaps*; has no harvest from it; but carries the burthen of age, without the wages of experience; nor knows himself old but from his infirmities, the parish-register, and the contempt of mankind. And what has age, if it has not esteem?—It has nothing.

Starting my friend from the same goal, thro' different paths, which severed our fortune, not our affection, we have run our race; and now approach its end. Jaded with our long journey, the spur of ambition blunted, and our spirits off their speed, we are glad of rest. In which, reflection on the

* In the frontispiece.

past is not only *useful*, but extremely *natural*. Look on the stormy sea, whose billows reach the clouds; then on the peaceful lake, where the feather, or fallen leaf, lyes unmoved; and you see the difference between the cool evening and warm meridian of man. Reflection is as natural to one, as action to the other. Unactive youth, and unreflecting age, are equal blanks in the book of life. Man varies no less than those varying insects at which he wonders. In his morning he crawls; long ere noon, flutters and flies; at evening, chill'd into languor, he creeps into corners, lyes laid, and sleeps: or, if awake, having but little ground before him, nor that the best; how naturally he looks back on the past? how naturally his winter's evening calls for its tale? and to self-love what tale so natural as our own. How idle soever our *tale* has been, if we can draw some *moral* from it, that will abate its insignificance, and give it some little weight by making us wiser for the future.

And want we not to be wiser? On how many fruitless friendships, ill-judged enmities, rash presumptions, cowardly despairs, unmanly flatteries, bold indecencies, idle schemes, airy hopes, groundless fears, opportunities lost, admonitions slighted, escapes unacknowledged, evils improved, blessings neglected, and trifles admired; on what a swarm of infirmities I look back with shame? How ambitious have we been in our attachments, not aware that all, most worthy our ambition, we can give ourselves? How fearful of expenses, not aware, that, till it escapes the gripe, and takes its flight into

some prudent use, money is not *wealth*; that it truly becomes *ours* only by our parting with it? How fond have we been of applause, not aware that human, separate from superior applause, is the greatest vanity, as well as the most common pursuit in life? How plainly I now see, that few things are more pernicious than too keen an appetite for applause, except a bold defiance of just reproach? *That* makes coxcombs; *this*, felons; *this* calls for detestation, that, for contempt.

How plainly do I now see, that our ignorance has been great? How often have we been so idle as to complain of our wants; that is, of our capacity of being happy: for, without wants, there would be no desires; and, without desires, no gratification of them; and, without gratification of desire, no happiness; for *human* happiness, nay the happiness of all created beings, consists in nothing else.

What on retrospect appears to me to be the capital weakness of man, is, that strange ascendant which his wishes have over his understanding: it is this makes a *Centaur*. How often have we looked on our wishes as infallible arguments for the certainty of what we desired; when others saw it was an impossible point? And of this capital weakness, a capital instance is, that dying men can scarce believe that they shall die. Are we not now as those yellow autumn leaves, which the first blast sweeps away? Yet we seem to think the green bud hardly more tenacious of the stem.

On farther review, *this* is stranger still: our

friends are our strongest ties to life : when these are cut, what but folly can renew the charm ? what re-engage our disenchanting hearts ? and what, in my retrospect, is an object more obvious, or striking, than yonder ensigns of death ? How the tyrant triumphs ? What numerous monuments rise over the cold bosoms that once warmly received us ? that shared our councils, our ambitions, our pleasures, and our hearts ? Their epitaphs collected would make a volume : a volume how instructive, if read aright ? A friend's monument is a friend's legacy ; and a richer to the considerate, than any parchment can convey. What, for the most part, is human wisdom, but the melancholy growth of a bleeding heart ? The thought of death is the directing helm of life ; and he bespeaks a wreck who lays it aside.

O my friend ! how rapid the human march ? Men are in haste ; how they hurry over the stage ? Where are those luminaries in every various walk of fame, in every kind of excellence, and renown, whomost fired our ambition, and provoked our envy ? Are they not passed away as *April* shadows over the field ; or, by the fire-side, a winter's tale ? Are not those far-seen, shining lights gone out apace after one another, as little sparks in the fired leaf, or paper, leaving us nothing but ashes behind ? And in their ashes is there nothing to be found but sorrow ? may we not light on a little prudence in them ?

Sorrow, indeed, predominates. Oh, recent wound ! Sorrow how just ? Whom lost we the very last moon ? — Lost *we* ? that is vainly said : whom lost the public ? whom the whole nation ? Few have

left it more worthy all love, and esteem, than our friend deceased *. He was made by nature to be beloved ; and intitled by virtue to be admired.

——— *Quem semper amatum,*

Semper honoratum, sic Dii voluisti, habebo. VIRG.

Well had it been, if we, like him, had sought esteem ; but we would not pay the price. Love we thought would come cheaper ; and seeking that, were in danger of losing both. The wise world will part with nothing, but by force. Love can't be compelled, esteem may. And, when it is, we lay in it, at the same time, the surest foundation for lasting love.

My retrospect shews me a *transitory* love, of which we have been too fond. A love often bestowed by great ones, on those whom they cannot esteem. This love, supposing it sterling, I (*stultus ego!*) returned in kind : but I do not repent it. I may not repent of my virtue : for, my friend ! there are two sorts of charity in the world, and which the greatest, is hard to say. We are bound, in compassion, to help the poor to *live*, and the rich to *enjoy* ; who feel a pain peculiar to themselves, that of being mocked by abundance, which denies them their expected happiness ; happiness in proportion to their purse. All I learn from such *ardent* lovers (for such generally they are) is, that it is dangerous to dip into most men below the surface, lest our curiosity should rob us of our good opinion of them. Much decorum, little homage, is requisite. My whole life tells me, that a just

* Sir J. S.

demand for *esteem* is sacred, but rare. We may well afford to pay it, when it *is due*. Nor must our *love* be with-held, where it is *not*. Universal love enjoined, is designed as an antidote against reciprocal contempt; and as a discipline to human pride, which must stoop to love men in their infirmities and *faults*: nor is it more our duty, than our prudence; how else could we hope quarter for our *own*, which both tell us of others faults, and bid us forgive them? For many of them we should not suspect, but from the whispers of their parallels in our own bosoms. And therefore, by not forgiving them, we condemn ourselves. If, then, we would be forgiven by ourselves, or others, we must forgive. A truth for which I thank my present review.

What I like least in this survey, for fear it should prove our own case, is *this*; I find old men apt to think well of themselves, not because they fly vice, but because vice is fled; repute themselves virtuous, because free from boys offences; set down impotence for victory; and triumph, because they have not fought, because they meet no foe. And what makes me even tremble, is, I see some, who, blameless in youth, are overtaken by folly when in years, and (of all sights the most deplorable!) I see them dragged by their white beards into the foulest enormities. Faults which are the natural growth of the distinct periods of life, may meet with some toleration: but the monstrous growth of vices out of season no man spares: because the hot-beds of *Lucifer* only can raise crimes, in which *nature* has no hand.

Heaven avert from us such an end? for, far from blameless was our beginning. In our early days (called the *days of innocence*), we had our little villainies; our vice in miniature: as years and temptations increased, in years less ripe, than in iniquity, we were no petty criminals, before we were men. We wished, indeed, for wisdom; but what wisdom would have avoided, we made our favourite choice; what wisdom would have chosen, we bid wait till to-morrow. Frequent were our quarrels with our faults; but rarely pushed on to a parting. Pleasure had its charms, and virtue its efforts; and sometimes, in a passion, threw its rider. But triumphs of passion are but short: no rebukes are so powerful as those from our own conduct. Affords not this, then, a strong caution for the future? The distempers of the past periods of our lives are the best antidotes for those to come.

Retrospection informs me, it was, *now*, open war with our enemy; *now*, perfect peace. How easy sin sat on our hearts; and called itself spirit, wisdom, any thing but what it was? When some merciful discipline awaked us from our trance, we fought; and we conquered: but what was our conquest? such as rather marred our wrong enjoyments, than wedded us closely to the right. We *called* the right our beloved, our spouse; but often committed adultery against it; thus losing the joys both of the sinner, and the saint: so motley a creature is man; as mutable, as God is fixed. Ours, indeed, was no uncommon case: but others faults are not our absolution. An absolution it is,

however, with which many are content: though his Holiness could scarce give his saints one more ineffectual and vain.

Who is he, my dear friend, that can absolve us, or condemn?—Look through thy whole past life, and answer. What year, nay, what day, has passed unimpowered to vouch for *his* clement, and absolute reign? See I not, in numberless instances. the naked hand of Providence stretched out, as it were, on this side the clouds, pointing us to good? Now, shewing how little this world can give, by pouring on us the full enjoyment of it; to turn our hearts on a better. Now, shewing us, by the calamities of others, how much we may suffer in this world; to keep us in awe, though ourselves were unhurt. Now, breaking to pieces all our own schemes, and raising our happiness out of their ruins; to teach us humility, gratitude, and on whom to rely; shewing us, that most of our triumphs are errors; and our disappointments, escapes. Now bringing us, when most secure, to the brink of the grave; to repress presumption. Now snatching us from it, when past all human help; to kindle devotion, and forbid the pain of despair. Now defeating us in spite of all our wisdom; now blessing us in spite of all our folly: blessing, to sweeten life; the contrary, to wean us from it; and thus, in both worlds, to provide for our welfare, as far as the nature of humanity will admit.

What a glorious image of divine goodness is this? The wisest cannot pay half its due in their

highest opinion, nor the best in their profoundest acknowledgment, of it. And can we not shew as inglorious a portrait of human *weakness* in ourselves? How are our two different paths of life equally strewed over with follies? with follies thick as autumn leaves! but not thick enough to hide our faults: So numerous both, that I am quite disinclined to look longer backward; and hasten, for refuge, into some change of thought. And here, shall only add, that man overlooks the most instructive book in his study, if he reads not himself.

And now, I fear, you will say, that how *useful* and *natural* soever Life's Review may be, yet you can find but little pleasure in it. In it there is no pleasure to be found but what has cost us some pain; but what we have fought our way to, thro' nature's perverse byas, and besieging temptations. Unbought pleasure is not the growth of earth: this is a militant state; nor must man unbuckle his armour till he puts on his shroud: for the most victorious veteran may meet with a defeat. Nothing in Life's Review can give delight, but what we may call our trophies, or spoils taken in war. All else is vanished as a dream.

What have I said? vanished as a dream!—— Would to God it was! 'tis *not*! Far from it! Every moment is immortal! Every moment shall return, and lay its whole freight, nothing lost, its every whisper, every thought, before the throne: the throne of him who sent it to man on that commission; and commands it back at the

stated day, to make its report; to be registered in eternity, for the perusal of angels, and the justification of their King. Tell our gay triflers, that there is no such thing as a trifle upon earth. Can any thing be a trifle that has an effect eternal? Tell them, though they are so well assured that there is nothing serious upon earth, that *time*, to man, is, in some respects, a more serious season than eternity: that *his* eternity is absolutely the creature of time: that 'tis foul or fair, rejoices or laments, as Time, omnipotent Time! (that trifle which they throw away) ordains its fate. If they doubt it, let them ask their jovial companion, who died of *their* happiness last night.

Many, my friend! have made a worse, many a better use of time than we have done. Many have been more criminal; many more innocent. But most men imagine that innocent which has a *negative* guilt. An idle day is a guilty day, in a life so short and precarious; with more than human thought can carry, incumbent on it. There are not more spots in the sun than in the life of a saint.

What then are we?—O my friend! at half a glance through life, I perceive, that, though we have made a shift to creep out of the *Augean Stable*, yet have we not scaled the temple of virtue: tho' we made the choice of *Hercules*, yet we wanted his strength: though we, sometimes, lop'd one head of the *Hydra*; yet, too often, seven shot up in its stead. Whereas, on the contrary, they that have been long tossed by folly, when once landed on a good life, should *burn their ships*; as *Caesar*

once burnt those of his legions on the *British* coast : I mean, that the warmest resolution should destroy the very desire of embarking in ill ; and to render a return impracticable.

Such, then, being our feeble attempts, so slender our pretence to wisdom, it becomes us to give those whom we have so freely treated, their revenge. To confess, that, though we are not quite *horizontal*, yet neither are we quite *upright* ; and, tho' we have set up for reformers, yet are we not, altogether, men.

A *man*, my friend ! is a glorious being ; a great rarity ; there are but few to be found. A *man* is an exalted character, doubly great ; he is an hero, and a king. Few kings are so great as to reign over their own hearts. Few heroes so victorious, as to drive *dominions*, *principalities*, and *powers*, before them. Both these meet in a *real man* : he ranks, in *reality*, but a little lower than the angels : nor long so low.—O friend ! man is a wonderful being ! Anon, I will tell thee what thou art ; and (mark what I say) I will surprise thee with thyself.

At present, only this—Dare we say, that we are arrived at the character I have mentioned ? No. Dare we say, It was not in our power ? No.—Why then this cowardice in a *possible* hero ? Why this disloyalty to himself, in a *possible* king ? Whence this reproach to reason, and immortality ? Whence this inglorious, and absolute desertion from our godlike selves ? Sounds that too high ? —In whose image were we made ? I foresee your

objection; I grant that image is impaired: but I quit not my point; I dare affirm, that beings which are free, rational, and immortal, may be Gods in due time, through divine grace, if they please.

How deplorable our distance from it? Whence this unmanly defect? Know we not, that, unless our conduct is that of a man, it had been better for us, if in a lower species had fallen our lot? Why were we called into being? What we have enjoyed already, poorly pays our mother's pain and our own. Wouldst thou repeat thy part in the comedy? act it over again? Wouldst thou be re-jumbled in this rough *Thespian* cart; dragg'd on by those two skeletons, half-starved *Hope*, and panting *Expectation*, through bad roads, now worse and worse, and thy fellow-strolers in a constant conspiracy against both thy pay and thy applause; how well soever thy part is performed; how great soever thy indulgence is to them?—Thou wouldst not. Here and there, indeed, we might pick up a lucky hour, *alboque notanda lapillo*, that might make us smile again. But nature, and indeed, reason, starts back at the whole. If we should find a small pearl in one oyster of a million, it would hardly make us fishers for life.

Wouldst thou, then, cease to be?—No, nature shudders at it. That horn of the alternative wounds more than the former: if so, our wishes, as well as our nature, push us into eternity. And shall we *fear* what we *wish*? Fear it we must, unless we provide a good reception there. We have

provided for to-morrow, and to-morrow was not satisfied. If we provide for eternity, our satisfaction will be full. We have provided for many years; for more than we shall ever see; but not for those which will never end.

How great the dishonour, my dear fellow-criminal! in us, who were not blind to the grand futurity, were not cold to the divine rewards; to let the glowing thoughts of immortality so far mingle with the dregs of sense? Is not this, with the wings of an eagle. to drop into the mire? *There* lies the *pleasure* of which the world is so fond; that bane of private property, that presage of public slavery, that sure annihilation of a rational creature, and as sure a creation of a wretch eternal. *Pleasure* has robb'd earth of more lives, and heaven of more souls, than the body-collective of all other evils discharging their whole quivers on man.

Our weakness, and our security under the consequences of it, is no uncommon case. Blushing I look round for its fatal cause. And do I not find it, where, if found, it must increase my confusion? Do I not find it in the *great goodness* of GOD? If so; how must that reproach and brand the deep ingratitude of man? And, I think, I find it there.

THE GENERAL CAUSE of SECURITY in SIN.

FOR, consider, my good friend! what can he do that ventures to continue in sin? He cannot defy the wrath divine; that is not in man. He cannot acquiesce under the terror of its conse-

quence. He must therefore presume on divine mercy. "I know myself worthless, yet earth pours its blessings. I know myself worthless, yet Heaven buys me with its blood. What is to be feared, what is not to be hoped from *such* a God? Be my crimes what they will, some yet unrevealed expedient will be found for my safety. "For *God is love.*" Thus, possibly, he may reason: and thus, at once, do two strange things: cite Scripture to his ruin, and make the mercies of God fatal to man.

God, indeed, is love: but shall man therefore be a monster? And a monster in the judgment of all men? All confess that there is an admirable consent between the precepts of virtue, and the sentiments of our common reason. All confess that virtue receives a constant approbation from the uniform verdict of our consciences. All confess, that virtue practised, brings in the greatest happiness to society. He, therefore, that is not virtuous, can give himself no satisfactory account, why he was born either with reason, or conscience, or a desire of happiness: since he has nothing of what they all demand from him. And, therefore, he must appear an unaccountable being; that is, a monster, not only to others but himself.

This is more than enough to make vice our aversion, tho' God were love to that absurd degree, which our folly may fancy, and which our vice most certainly wishes and wants. But there is no *such* love in him: it is blasphemous to suppose it. *God is love*, and therefore—what? That which

many may least expect—therefore God is *terrible* : from whence arises his marvellous love to man ? Of man he has no need ; the divine happiness is complete : in man he sees no merit ; he knows we are worthless, as well as we ourselves : but then, far better than we, he knows that we are—*Immortal*. That therefore (most interesting and most alarming thought !) that therefore we *must* suffer, or enjoy, for *ever*.

Hence, be most assured, my friend ! his regard for man. Hence, for a worm, to-day crawling out of the earth ; and to-morrow more despicably still, crawling into corruption ; his compassion, his solicitude, his councils held on high ; and all the wonders of his love. Wonders ?—much more than wonders to man ; they are wonders in heaven ! They strike with amazement the first angels of light.

Conscious of thy own meanness, can'st thou scarce believe that divine indulgence should thus abound ? Consider : God, indeed, called us out of the *dust*. But he called us into an *eternity* : an eternity, henceforward, commensurate with his own : and shall not his concern be commensurate in degree, bear a proportion to his gift ? Shall not one shew as much of the great God as the other ? As he has made us *immortal* ; he has made us also *endangered*, creatures. Creatures that must, necessarily, stand the most important and incomprehensible consequence of their own doubtful conduct for ever. Does not this abate thy surprize at such abundant indulgence ? It must,

if *GOD is love*, and vouchsafes to look on us in the mentioned light. In that light he looks on us. Thence his more than paternal bowels of compassion for the most unworthy of men. Thence his omnipotence exerted in giving proofs of his love.

But why, sayest thou, is this love *terrible*? Is not that love *most* terrible, which tells us we are in danger of being eternally undone? And *this* love tells us so; for (as I conceive) it never had existed, had not that been our case.

How deep, then, and deplorable, is their mistake, who presume to sin, because GOD is so good: when GOD is so good purely because he knows that presumption will be their ruin? Who presume on impunity for sin, because GOD is so good; when GOD is so good, purely because he knows that sin, and impunity, are incompatible? Such men make a demonstration of their danger, the basis of their security; and fear nothing, because an Omnipotence, that is solicitous for their welfare, gives proof that he is apprehensive of their destruction.

Such men reason ill. Still worse, experience cannot convince them. What their experience of every day, every hour, proves to be true, they will not believe: they *doubt*, if they shall be (not to use a harsher word) condemned for their sins. Yet they *know* that they shall die. Now, as I take it, their death is a prelude, and assurance, of their future condemnation: for, if beings, originally immortal, die for another's sin, can it be doubted, but that they shall be condemned for their own? And that death (which is a demonstration that

sin shall not escape unpunished) is unavoidable, they are convinced by their *senses*: unless our Centaurs, therefore, lay aside their senses, as well as their reason, for the future they must forego vain hopes, too frequent, and too sanguine, among them. Nor longer turn a proof of immortality into a presumption on impunity; Heaven's indulgence, into destruction; and gather poison from the tree of life.

I know not, my friend! if others have urged these arguments, with regard to the cause of God's great indulgence to man, and the certainty of punishment for sin; but to me they appear of a very weighty and affecting nature. There are some truths of the last moment to men, which, at first aspect, have somewhat surprising in them: they require, and well deserve, our second thoughts.

I will give you two; one from scripture; one from my own thoughts: *With the Lord there is mercy, therefore shall he be feared.—With man there is immortality, therefore shall he tremble.—* Tremble at himself! Tremble at his own power, which can give what colour he will to a whole eternity. Tremble at his own glory; that he has angels for his guard; and an Almighty for his friend. Yes, tremble at all that might incline him to triumph: for these grandeurs, that inspire presumption, increase danger: are magnificent assurances that he may be plunged beyond hope; be lost past retrieve.

GOD, indeed, forbids our despair: but not because his love will save us in our sins; but because

despair stops all effort at amendment; and without it his love desires our welfare in vain. His love is such, as to give us encouragement, and support, in every thing but sin: such, as to support our spirits amid the ruins of a falling world; but not under the cloud of one unrepented guilt.

This flings light on a part of scripture, which has a cloud on it in some eyes; and with others quite ruins its credit: *Work out your salvation with fear and trembling*: a strange text to those, who fear and tremble at nothing so much as at a disappointment in their lusts. Our salvation must be *worked out*: wishing, and willing, will not bring it; hoping, and confiding, will not procure it; it will not come by chance; no, nor by gift, and infusion. It must be worked out with *fear*, because fear is the strongest guard of diligence, without which, this work cannot go on; and with *trembling*, lest we should fail in this important work; lest we should think too lightly of the divine justice; and lest our very confidence should betray us, even though we were good men: for good men have failed purely from a good opinion of their own state. For a good opinion begets security; security begets negligence, and negligence temptation; and temptation, a fall: and (if unrepented) a fall into that state, where our *first* wish will be, that we never had been born; and (worse still!) where there is no *last*. Pain is sometimes so great even *here*, that we lose our senses; *there* it will be far greater; and (how terrible to say!) our senses will *not* be lost.

THOUGHTS for AGE.

ON the bank of that state we, *now*, stand : that post of wisdom, if ever men are wise : which is the reason why they wish it may be long before they arrive at it : for folly is the favourite of mankind ; and is it not our own ? Tho' there we stand, we scarce believe it ; so much our wishes obstruct our belief : or, believing, scarce know what being *there* means ; so much familiarity takes away our attention ; and robs things of their power to strike strong on our minds. *Eternity* has so often passed our lips, that it has forgot its way to our hearts. Did it enter there, would it not extinguish every earth-born passion in them ? Yes ; as the sun, the smallest spark of fire.

Though we stand on its awful brink, such our leaden bias to the world, we turn our faces the wrong way ; we are still looking on our old acquaintance, *time* ; though, *now*, so wasted and reduced, that we can see little more of him than his *wings* and his *scythe* : our age enlarges his wings to our imagination ; and our fear of death, his scythe ; as *time* himself grows less. His consumption is deep : his annihilation is at hand.

Should we not then turn us round, and look on eternity ? That glorious home of all that survives, and outshines the sun ; that kingdom of souls immortal ! Of immortal souls, *time* is only the maturing womb ; from eternity they wait their *real* birth. Are we, my friend ! matured ? or shall we prove abortive to the world of glory ? If we were

mature, why tarry here so long? By protracting life, Heaven shews not its favour to those that are fit to die. Is not, the business of our day undone, the cause why we are suffered to sit up so late? To be so long on our weary legs, after the common hour of human rest? I fear it is. I much fear we are permitted to live, purely because—we do not deserve it.

Is it not, (my languid fellow-traveller in the deep vale of years!) high time to be wiser? lest the greatest of curses should fall on us, that of being wise too late: which is the most emphatical definition of a fool. The world is worn out to us; and we are worn out to the world. The world, which knows its own interest, quits us, as rats a ruined house; if we knew *ours*, should we not quit the world, as bees an exhausted flower? We can make no more honey of it; its sweets are gone. Where are its formerly sweet delusions, its airy castles, and glittering spires? Are we not left on a lonely, barren, briery heath, to grope out our weary way, through the dusk of life, to our final home! Shall not the dissolved enchantment set the captive free? Are we *Torriismond's* or *Sudbury's*? Shall our dotage rivet our chains, when kind nature would knock them off? To speak a language even Centaurs may understand, "A last card, well play'd, may yet win the game."

Consider; are we scheming still? stretching out a trembling hand, which wants to be supported, to grasp at the nothing that comes next? Any

thing now gain'd would rather mock, than enrich us; can any thing enrich, that cannot be enjoyed? Grasp at new *faculties*, and new *powers*, if thou can'st find them, or new objects will only laugh us to scorn. But hadst thou even those, if the value of things is in proportion to our term in them, their price at our market should fall very low.

It is a good thing to know when we have *all*, and to laugh at that cheat *more*, which is ever stealing our hearts. But it is as uncommon, as good. Hence, seniors are milking the world after it is dry. Is it not a shame that we should be gleaning sublunary *straws*, when our harvest of life is over? hoping an after-crop in our stubble? Though called to diadems, where harvest is perpetual; where an harvest, more than golden, profusely crowns an eternal year.

As to the pals which is so much feared; the dark subterranean entry to future life; into which our weak imagination peeps, and starts back as a child at a shadow; all thanks to the blessed Gospel, we know what will light us up a lamp in it, and lessen its formidable gloom. I have seen a death-bed, the reverse of poor *Altamont's*, where the by-standers were the greatest sufferers; and the king of terrors, by Christian patience was over-matched. The power of religion shone out without a veil; nor could any rising suspicions of hypocrisy dim its lustre. In such scenes as these the human heart is no longer visible to man; and a glimpse of heaven is discovered in such a sight.

We know what can make us sleep sweetly in

the dust: what can smooth the rough transition; soften death into a sort of translation, which interrupts not (blessed be GOD!) our existence, nor our peace. In peace have many died; and, therefore, 'tis certain, all *may*. The whole secret for obtaining that peace, is an absolute resignation to the Most High; which (as hard a task as it seems to some) at the bottom it is no more than owning him to be GOD. And a contrary conduct (as little as 'tis considered) has atheism, partial atheism, in it. It is questioning some of his attributes, though not denying a GOD. May that peace be thine! My heart beats with ardor for thy present peace and future bliss. May I share it with thee! What a poor broken embrace what a sad fragment of friendship, is that which ends at the grave? Such a transitory tie gives a second dart to death; and a double dissolution to departing man. That of soul and body scarce more severe.

Would to heaven! that all friendships were, *evidently*, friendships of immortal men. Such, I mean, as gave proof of their having each others *eternal* interests at heart. Modern, at least, fashionable, friendship flows from a polluted source; it tastes too strong of earth; without the least tincture of *Man* (as above described); without the least spirit of *immortality* in it. Nay, worse; it often springs from causes that will not bear the light; and resembles the dark streams of *Aipheus* and *Arethusa*, that mingle under ground. It should rather resemble *Eridamus*, which is said to flow from heaven.

How many have we of these subterranean attachments? What is it ties our Centaurs together in so long a *string*?—Leaping together the same barriers of the decent, and the just; ranging the same forbidden grounds; gorging at the same manger; neighing the same inflammatory tune; or being daily rid, and sorely galled by the domineering insolence of the same inflamed mistress.

Since such their accomplishments, I hope to levy a *Lapithean* infantry sufficient successfully to carry on the war now opened against them.—As *Chiron* blew the trumpet which called the *Greeks* to the siege of *Troy*; I hear there is a modern *Chiron*, who sounds as many instruments, as *Nebuchadnezzar* did to summon his idolaters; and that he raises forces, and ceases not to carry on the war at a *vast* expence. Doubtless he was typified of old by him who is said in *Virgil*;

Ære ciere viros, martemque accendere cantu.

For my own part, my friend! I fancy my campaign will soon be over. I have frequent pains: and, I think, I hear the master's call. If so, should we not leave this world, though not yet admitted of the next? Have we not been, thro' life, anxiously providing one year for the next? And shall we grudge to pay half that pains for an Eternity?

Consider, my *immortal* friend! should we not leave the world, before the world leaves us? It is dismal to be left. There is a noble absence from earth, while we are yet on it: there is a noble intimacy with Heaven, while we are yet beneath it. If our affection flies thither, we shall

be welcomed by superior beings, and not be missed by men, who delight in novelties; or, if missed, admired the more for being *once* in the right. They must be somewhat out of this world, who would be deep in the concerns of the next: and is it not time we should be so? Till the business of life (as 'tis called) is over, its real business is rarely begun: nor always then. Age is apt to carry its allowed title to repose too far: age is the most busy period of human life. But its transactions are not with men. Therefore that absence above-mentioned is most fit for us. It is a sort of a third state between this world and the next. How proper then for the reception of those, whose term is out, here, according to the common age of man?

And can it be hard for us to lay this world aside, since they that have fared best in the world, have only the fewest objections against it. Is it not an old tragi-comedy read over and over, which by no means

Decies repetitum placebit? JUV.

To speak in the licentious stile of comedy, Man is a mule, of mixed origin, of heaven and earth: earth has had more than its share of us; give heaven the rest: and that for a *double* reason. All know that hope is life's cordial: it works miracles; without happiness it makes men happy. What have been all the pleasures of our former years, but joyous prophecies and bold promises in the name of to-morrow? Worldly *hope* in age expires. If he provides not another hope, a man of years, and a man of misery, mean the same thing. Therefore

the same steps are to be taken, whether we would sweeten the remaining dreg of life, or provide a triumph for eternity.

The worldly wishes, which an old man sends out, are like *Noah's* dove; they cannot find whereon to light, and must return to his own heart again for rest. His natural, and perhaps, most allowable and proper wish, is for respect. But respect for age is a *virtue*. I need say no more to convince him how little of it he must expect: and, indeed, he but ill deserves it from others, who, by doating on the world, denies it to himself.

When infirmity drives the world from us, or disease confines us to our chamber, shall we not be all alone with the great Father of spirits, and Searcher of hearts? Is it not worth while a little beforehand to practise our lesson, that we may be the better prepared to sustain such an interview? Our wisdom cannot add to the days, but it can lighten the burden of life, and lessen the terrors of death. Death forgot in youth is folly; in age, madness. With regard to that king of terrors, how many in years *borrow* the security of youth; for it is impossible it should belong to them. Happy they! whom death, when he comes, shall find at home; his visit will have less of terror in it. Out of pure decency to the dignity of human nature, of which the decays and imperfections should not be exposed, men in years, by recess, should sling a veil over them, and to the world be a little buried before they are interred. An old man's too great familiarity with the public is an indignity to the

human nature, and a neglect of the divine. A greater intercourse with it than the calls of duty and virtue demand, is indecent, irreligious and contemptible : speaking acquiescence in contempt, dotage on the world, and oblivion of eternity. His fancying himself to be still properly one of this world, and on a common foot with the rest of mankind, is, as if a man getting drunk in the morning, after a long nap, lifting his drowsy lids at sunset, should take it for break of day.

But grant him to be still of this world ; grant him all it can give. What is this world, but a machine played on us by our *great enemy* for the dissipation of human thought, whose scattered rays *must* be collected, as it were, to a focal point, in order duly to warm our devotion, and set a pious heart on fire ? And can any happiness subsist in age without piety ? Impossible ! Its intimacy with the world, is not for the pleasures it can give ; they are past ; 'tis purely to dislodge the thoughts of death, which intrude at that season ; that is, it is purely to decline the pleasures of heaven.

Why, my friend ! is our day of trial extended beyond the expiration of the common term ? Is it not indulged to the great need our past conduct has of it ? And shall our folly reverse the kind intention of that divine indulgence to us ? Shall it set us farther from our GOD ? I am never so strongly struck with the weakness and depravity of man, as when I see grey hairs playing the fool. Hope, which in other evil appearances supports our spirits, fails us there. What can shock common sense,

what can create amazement, if not the failings that would dishonour youth, in those that are miraculously alive after the stated period of human life? This is an outrage to reason, beyond the boldness of the desperado that confounds us most: this outdares the felon repeating his crime, not only under the gallows, but with the cord about his neck. Where is that world into which you and I were born? It is under ground; and a generation of strangers are dancing over our coevals, long since in the dust. Where is that world into which we shall be born? Far, far above the sun, if, while we *are* beneath it, we behave ourselves like men. But if this life was our only concern, consider, that nothing but being wiser, that is better than those born after us, can possibly rescue the decays of age from aversion and contempt.

Fain would I have my pen of some service to the aged, now my nearest relations, those of blood, are no more. To the former am I related by like-
date, duty, interest, concern; and, above all,

—*Nunc ipsa pericula jungunt.* OVID.

Still eager in worldly pursuits, warm in the chace of shadows, shall we rush, as down a precipice, and leap plumb into the jaws of *extempore* death?

No, let us halt in our career; pause on the brink, and provide for our eternal peace. Can I better express my love than by pressing it on thee? I press it strongly. And know, my friend! that Heaven, and (as I have shewed thee) a most indulgent Hea-

150 THOUGHTS *for* AGE.

ven, joins my pathetic wish; and angels, ardent angels, say *Amen*. And what want they? (mark it well), they want nothing but thy *own* concurrence to crown their wishes for thy welfare.

Dear Sir,

Yours,

L E T T E R VI.

The DIGNITY of MAN.

The CENTAUR'S RESTORATION.

to

H U M A N I T Y.

The DIGNITY of MAN RESUMED.

The CONCLUSION.

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L E T T E R VI.

The DIGNITY of MAN.

HERE, Sir, I enter on that elevated theme,
The *dignity of man*.

Major rerum mihi nascitur ordo.

VIR.

I shall scale the summit of human nature, and set its dignity in the strongest light ; that the contrast may strike our Centaurs with a just sense of their own ghastly condition, and more clearly demonstrate the depth of their fall. Many are for degrading their nature, that they may lessen its duties ; and for looking on themselves as beings insignificant, that they may be profligate beings with a better grace, and (as they would flatter themselves) with more excuse. They run voluntarily into this error, as men into the dark, that they may sin without a blush ; framing a lie (which is the common case) for their apology. Their master *Epicurus* meant much the same, by setting the gods at such a distance ; and for their repose, exempting them from the trouble of inspecting the trifles of men. A due sense of the grandeur of man's nature, and destination, is his best bulwark against the frequent and violent assaults temptation makes on him. This is a subject which I wish had been taken into better hands. For, as it demands all the powers of the noblest pen to reach its heights ; so the world stands in need of having

this, above all other, pressed home on their hearts ; for all other of any great moment are implied in it. There are but few whose opinions do not too much widen the distance between an angel and a man. I shall bring them nearer together, as the best means for the reformation of Centaurs (as you shall see), and for the most noble exaltation of men.

I have just now observed, that—"Angels want nothing but thy own concurrence to crown their wishes for thy welfare."—This is true: shall I not then be pardoned, if I presume to put the same meaning into somewhat an higher stile, and say (with all reverence) that heaven's desires are at thy mercy?—If so, think, and think again, What art thou? Thou poor, feeble, earth-born mortal ! What art thou?—Darts not on thee a stream of heavenly light? Dost thou not see an amazing majesty in man? Have I not, then, made my bold promise good? Did I not, above, tell thee, I would surprise thee with myself?

Nor can I rest here. A man is almost more than man can conceive; a marvellous being that rises above himself, darting rays of glory beyond the reach of his own sight. My heart is tied to this endearing, transporting, and triumphant theme.

Is thy consent necessary to finish what is begun, or rather, only designed, above? How strangely this sounds! Yet must I proceed in a still higher strain.—In thee it is, (how seemingly bold and impious so to speak?) yes, it is in thee, to grant, or deny, the request of the Almighty.—And impious,

indeed, it would be, if unauthorized by scripture, in which that request is made.

A requesting Omnipotence!—What can stun and confound thy reason more? What more can ravish and exalt thy heart? It can't but ravish and exalt; it can't but gloriously disturb and perplex thee, to take in all *that* thought suggests. Thou child of the dust! thou speck of misery and sin! how abject thy weakness? how great is thy power? Thou crawler on earth, and possible (I was about to say) controuler of the skies!

Weigh, and weigh well, the wondrous *truths* I have in view: which cannot be weighed too much: which, the more they are weighed, amaze the more: which to have supposed, before they were revealed, would have been as great madness, and to have presumed on, as great sin, as it is now madness and sin, *not* to believe. Such precious, and beatifying news is brought us by revelation; that revelation which is rejected, and despised, by those that affect to be thought wiser, and happier, than the rest of mankind.

The *truths* I mean, are implied in what follows; *viz.* Heaven intends, desires, labours, works miracles, or more (if more can be), for thy welfare: it presses thee, it importunately presses thee, to comply. Consider; how art thou courted? And, by whom? By Father, Son, and Holy Spirit; thy *fellow-labourers* for thy good. How is thy alliance sought? and at what a price? Angels, inspecting, admiring angels, cannot compute its value. An extreme of love, an extreme of glory,

this, which those angels (if angels could envy) might envy to man: for was it not denied to them?

Thou younger, but darling son of heaven! wonder; tremble; triumph!—Yes, triumph; tremble; wonder! Thy greatest emotion falls short of the mighty cause. Thou greatly beloved, greatly favoured, greatly destined, and, oh! greatly endangered! take heed to thy steps. Nor less take fire at thy prize.

Art thou more exalted, or terrified, at what I say? Exultation, and fear, both rise in extremes.—With both passions comply; highly reverence thy *own* nature; more profoundly adore the *divine*. Adore it with voice, heart, and life: and thus, to glad all heaven, assert, rescue, ennoble, and with bliss eternal crown thyself: for without thee, in the constituted order of things, heaven is unable to do it. Its almighty hand is, as it were, tied up by its own decree. Without thee, thou amazing being! (pardoned be the word so bold) there is impotence in heaven. Nor is it bold when explained; for impotence, when voluntary, is no impeachment of power.

Is all this *rapturous*?—Yes, such a rapture, as nothing but gross ignorance, or more fatal infidelity, can forbear. Is not rapture due for felicities inexpressible? And what felicity is so much as second to this? It is the close, frequent, and feeling inspection of these *interiora* of man's sublime condition, as *immortal* and *redeemed*, that is the highest cordial of human joy, and the richest mine of

human thought. A mine deep-dug by few ! and yet, without it, man is not more a stranger to the natives of *Saturn*, than to himself. Without it, he must want the true, genuine, vital spirit of a Christian. None without it can be filled with the light and comfort of the Holy Ghost. This, O ye Methodists ! gives the real new birth : this enters man in quite another world. In his *former* world all things are absolutely changed ; well nigh annihilated as to his wonted passion for them.

The heavens declare the glory of the Lord, and the firmament sheweth his handy-work. But the Christian *mine* I have mentioned, infinitely more demands our adoration and praise : infinitely more demands our exultation and joy. Are we transported, and justly transported, at the wonderful operations of nature ; and decline we the contemplation of greater wonders in ourselves ? And when the former but amuses an hour, the last blesses an eternity ? In those stupenduous views it is, that the mercy of GOD, and glory of man, at highest shine. Hence it is, that constant joy is enjoined to Christians as an absolute duty : a duty, on weaker motives, as absolutely impracticable.

You see, Sir, that to dive deep into man, is to dive into an ocean of love divine ; which first drowns us in amazement, then lifts us into triumph ; and, at length, lands us (if we are wise) on eternal life. But too many swim only on the surface of our nature ; like a feather, through their levity, incapable of sinking to those solid and shining advantages, those pearls of great price ; those

great, awakening, and strongly stimulating motives to virtue that ly below. But I shall resume this *subject* before I close. What is already said is enough to produce that good effect which you will find in the marvellous scence which, very soon, will open on you.

The CENTAUR'S RESTORATION to HUMANITY.

AT present, my friend ! we must quit this consecrated, for enchanted ground ; as you will soon, to your surprize and disgust, perceive. I know it is not to your taste ; nor, indeed, to my own : but *levity* has its use, when perverse patients will refuse what is salutary, if conveyed in any vehicle less agreeable to their vitiated taste ; and the grave reader, who nauseates it, sacrifices (thro' too great delicacy) to mere appearances the substance of what is right.

Thou knowest that our Centaurs can scarce be persuaded that they are not still human creatures ; though *macchantur, scortantur, adulterantur, diabolantur* (I am forced to make words that are bad enough for them) ; and not so much as retain

—*Veteris vestigia formae.* Ov.

Are they not (to speak with reverence in the language of the prophet) as *fed horses in the morning* ? Do they not *assemble by troops in ladies houses* ? It is *Harlots* in the original ; and so by us translated. But that is not their only objection to the scriptures. Perhaps, an old *Arabian* proverb may have greater authority with them. What says it ?

“ Let him that would be safe, avoid seven things;
 “ wasps, spiders, hyenas, crocodiles, efts, adders,
 “ and *fine* women.”

Here, then, I shall begin my exorcism. Its words must be strange and barbarous, suited to the occasion. Let not your ear, my friend, be shocked; but listen, and wait the event.

“ May *Lais*, *Thais*, *Limax*, *Lupa*, *Succuba*; *Quadrantaria*, *Obolaria*, *Euriote*, *Ethenio*, *Medusa*,
 “ *Erinnys*, *Megaera*, and *Tysiphone*—May all
 “ these, and all such ladies, whether sick or sound,
 “ high or low, of blood and title, or ditch and
 “ dunghill; natives, foreign, or infernal—May this
 “ glorious groupe of *Torriismond*’s angels, these
 “ gorgons, furies, harpies, leaches, syrens, centaur-
 “ making syrens! paid or unpaid, keeping or kept,
 “ on fire or quench’d; genev’d or citron’d, in
 “ closet or cellar, in tavern, bagnio, brothel, round-
 “ house, Bridewell, or Newgate—Oh! may they
 “ cease, from this hour, to sing or dance, smile or
 “ frown, please or plague, pray or swear our Bri-
 “ tish unbritish youth, manhood, and age, out of
 “ their senses, health, estates, reputation, human
 “ nature and hopes of heaven!

“ And, these enchantresses laying aside their
 “ spells, may the bewitched of *Great Britain* reco-
 “ ver their *pristine* form, as *Circe*’s herd, at the
 “ prayer of *Ulysses*. At the touch of my disen-
 “ chanting pen, may they leap out of their hides
 “ for joy; and laying hold on their long deserted
 “ definition of man, *reason and two legs*, walk up-
 “ rightly for the future.”

Rejoice with me, my friend ! For do I dream ? or didst thou not observe ? didst thou not hear ?—*Intonuit laevum.* As the dark cloud which caused it is vanished, and a flood of light rushes in ; so shall it fare with *them*. I see their dawning reason ; I see the break of their moral day. And what I see I shall relate ; and what I relate, though strange, let no man disbelieve.

The Centaurs that can read, on perusal of the *Dignity of Man*, are stung as the *Trojan* horse, when *Laocoon's* spear pierced his side ; and groan as deeply as that, when

Insonnere cavae, gemitumque dederat cavernae. VIR. Most of them are much affected, but differently ; being, at last, fully convinced that they are *not* men. One burns his *Bolingbroke* ; another an indecent song : this calls in his bills, pleading privilege no more : that bespeaks a pew against the next quarter : a third blames his delay ; swears he will pray directly ; falls on his knees, like *Caesar's* horse,—rises again with a sigh, and solemn vow, that he will be master of his *Pater noster* before to-morrow : a fourth subscribes all his gains by false dice to the Foundling Hospital : a fifth orders two little boys to school immediately ; and sends ten guineas to their mothers in Bridewell ; a sixth, in a flame of pious zeal, damns a senseless world ; and undertakes, in less than a week, to demonstrate that adultery is a crime. A seventh, &c.

But I must not triumph too much. I have not had equal success with the female Centaurs. From a natural constancy of temper, and habitual aver-

sion to change, they come but slowly into my wishes. But, to make amends, when they come, they come with a vengeance, and over-shoot the mark. Mr *W—y* (whose converts some of them are) tells them, that they stand not upright, unless they lean a little backward ; like a crozier, or like themselves when they coyly refuse a salute : thus, though converted, they find not the strait line, but stand still a little bent—to the wrong.

Besides, of my male converts I have somewhat to complain : for some, though changed at heart, yet awed by fashion, and vain of being still *fine men*, are ashamed to own it ; and *appear* to be fools to save their credit. These hypocrites in vice, these moral fops, ridiculously good, may be called *little men* in Centaurs skins : or coward virtue in masquerade.

And worst of all, of some Centaurs I am quite in despair. They fly my pen, and will not be *touched* for their distemper. But, being deep stung by worse than the *tarantula*, run mad for music, and dance themselves to death. Others, with *Swift* (in that respect a Centaur himself) look on the noble quadrupede as superior to the man. Others, on the contrary, approve, and heartily wish a *Restoration* to Humanity ; but are careless and indolent. They would, indeed, if a daemon was not in possession, they *would* be good ; but will not be at the trouble of bringing a writ of *ejection*, tho' *Sophronius* proffers to draw it up for them. The lowest price of virtue is vigilance and industry, and if it costs us no more, it comes very cheap.

As for those that are truly conscious of their calamity, and heartily desirous of an escape, mark the good effect of the least tendency to goodness; the mighty change, a Restoration of the human figure, is, actually, begun. But the process is gradual; nature advances, never leaps. They became not Centaurs all at once:

Nemo repente fuit turpissimus. JUV.

Asevil habits, which occasioned their transformation, were gradually contracted, it is no wonder that their recovery should prove equally gradual and slow. One sheds a mane, another drops a tail; and appears only as too closely dock'd: some wonder to see slender fingers sprouting thro' hoofs, by their penitential tears mollified into flesh: some, like dancing dogs, continue upright some time; but, tired of that unnatural restraint, drop into Centaurs for life. So dangerous, in moral distempers as well as natural, is a relapse: some quite restored, yet still retain so much of their former nature, that they are apt to trip, if a strong temptation, like a stone, or cart-rut, lyes across their way: some can scarce believe their good fortune, and fear it is a dream. Others, too sanguine, cry out Brother! to the first man they see; who starts at his new relation, with a hide still sticking at his heels.

What a loud call do I hear among them for things strange and new? for dresses suited to the human shape; for pleasures suited to the human mind; for bibles,* prayer-books, debt-books? for virtuous consorts, faithful friends, and fit objects of

charity? for rational improvement and employments? no longer for New-market trappings, but for human ornaments? This, however, where the restoration is complete. Poor *Sudbury* is still awkwardly hopping on three legs; while others stand firmly planted on half four: one of whom, more learned than the rest, cries out;

THEY WHO HAVE

HE

The rest naturally take it for a pious thanksgiving, and give a loud *Amen*.

They that are quite recovered, arrayed in decent, plain apparel, not dappled as the morning, with embroidery, or with lace all over lifted like the beautiful *Indian* als, call a council; and their first *wanly* resolution is to proclaim peace with the *Lapithae*, or men of virtue; with whom, from time immemorial, the Centaurs have been at war. *Chiron* bent his bow against them: but of war various has been the fortune between them; till within this last half century, the Centaurs encreasing both in numbers and boldness, wearing frontlets of brass on their foreheads, and *Horace's Aes triplex* on their breasts; and having of late a mighty giant at their head, whose quills, more fatal than the porcupine's, threatened a thousand deaths at once, they began to dream of nothing less than victory complete. But the present reinforcements of their enemies will turn the scale against them. I say reinforcement; for the next step my converts take is to list into the *Lapithean* service, determined to meet their late friends in no friendly sort, under a banner with this motto, *Quid verum, atque decens, curo et rogo, et omnis in hoc sum.*

Which promises victory : for they are very formidable foes, who have had the fortitude first to conquer themselves.

At the news of their revolt, offended *Torrismond*, burning for revenge, cries, ha, ha ! snuffs the battle from afar,

Collectumq; premens volvit sub naribus ignem. VIR.

The glory of his nostrils is terrible. And still more abundantly his heroic choler rises on hearing that their first destined enterprise, is against *Bolingbroke* castle, that delight of his eyes, and defiance of his foes ; for he deems it impregnable, because it is moted round with *Acheron*, and its aspiring, proud battlements threaten Heaven.

This castle was built out of the various ruins of many demolished forts of Infidelity, pompously put together, faced over with a material more shining than solid ; and cemented with untempered mortar. *Sophronius* * heads the laudable enterprize. The castle is taken as was antient *Babylon*. He first turns the general stream of the nation, by the force of strong and solid eloquence, into a new channel, as *Cyrus* did the river *Euphrates* ; then entering the castle, and finding the garrison turning things sacred to profane use, and drowned in debauch ; obtains a sudden and complete victory ; but is a most merciful conqueror : for, instead of putting any to death, he only puts the most sensible of them out of countenance : and to their own darling delights, and boasted glories, instead of the gallies, con-

* An excellent author in this controversy, now in the press.

demns them for life. Obliging them, however, in acknowledgment of his clemency, to wear yellow cockades, impressed with these words, "*Be thou a Centaur still!*" The bad man's choice includes his punishment.

The same *Sophronius*, adorned with his well deserved mural crown, rescues the character of a late pious and learned prelate, which the Centaurs boasted *Achilles* (who,

Jura negat sibi nata, nihil non arrogat.) HOR. had dragged, like *Hector's* body, round the town in the dirt. For the glory of *Britain*, and for the light and emulation of posterity, I see it inscribed on a column of adamant, with a *Bolingbroke couchant* embossed on the base; who now contributes to support (as much as such a feeble *Atlas* can) that celestial character which he lately laboured to destroy; proud of his uncircumcised *reason*; which reason, notwithstanding, had evidently lost its *authority* with himself: for when *that* is preserved, sense submits to reason; and when sense submits to reason, reason submits to the revealed word of *God*. And (since some are in love with words) I must observe, that reason stooped to revelation, is reason still; only reason more reasonable; and its great bazard of error is all that it has lost.

And now, my friend! what shall I say on this happy revolution? Shall I not out-boast *Augustus*? He said of *Rome*, *Latericeam inveni, Marmoream reliqui*. I, of *London*, *Inveni Equinam, reliqui Humanam*.

Nothing remains, but to cleanse the now desert-

ed *stables*, and to render them fit for human use; and to persuade the she-grooms who kept them, into some more decent, and less diabolical course of life; especially my patroness, who for the honour (as she calls it) of my dedication, has promised to give into my superstition, and to play fair, at least on *Sundays*, and learn her Catechism when the *masquerades* for the season are over; which, out of an unsurmountable regard for the first, and most amorous, and most musical son, *Chiron*, she confesses ingeniously, she cannot forbear. For ladies love a Centaur still.

The DIGNITY of MAN Resumed.

IT is high time, my friend! to quit this fairy-land, of which, I know you are heartily tired; and to perform my promise in resuming the *Dignity of Man*; a theme which my heart affects; and which your conduct, in some measure, inspires. And who can think of it unimproved? He who *thinks* of his Dignity, necessarily thinks of his God: and he who *values* his Dignity, as necessarily worships and obeys Him. In a due sense, therefore, of human Dignity, our endangered virtue finds her most powerful guard.

Think you that I have carried the dignity of man too high? Spare the sacred page. “There, one
“of *Adam’s* seed converses face to face with his
“creator. Another is called his friend. He who
“made the worlds delights to be called the son of
“a third. He who made the worlds even died for

"the meanest of men. The meanest of men has
"it within his power to be an heir of the most
"mighty GOD, and a joint-heir with the most
"blessed JESUS." Absolves not this the boldest
stroke of my pen? what can raise our self-estima-
tion so high, what can aggrandize human nature
so much as this?

In Heaven's great and constant *effort* for our
welfare, is capitally written the dignity of man.
That is a key to the moral world, and opens and
explains the reason of all GOD's otherwise myste-
rious conduct in it. Every step of which is evi-
dently calculated for man's present or future fe-
licity, or both. The long shining series, the
golden chain of all GOD's marvelous acts, from the
beginning to the close of time, speaks his uninter-
rupted regard for human nature; and what can
more loudly proclaim human dignity than this?
O let it not be said, that man's dignity is declared
by all things, but the manners of man!

As distant as they may be thought by the
thoughtless, heaven and earth are so near together,
so shot (as it were) into one another, that good
men are truly *foreigners on earth; have their con-
versation in heaven; are fellow-citizens with the
Saints, and of the household of God.* To speak al-
lusively to the patriarchal vision, good men are
Angels; only, as yet at the bottom of the ladder;
and some Angels are only men made perfect, at the
top of it. As a man from an embryo, so differs an
Angel from a man; what one is, the other soon
shall be. Since this is the case (and a most glorious

case it is), and since by such multitudes it is either not considered, or not known ;

O fortunati nimium, bona si sua norunt ! VIRG. would be no needless memorandum, or improper motto, for all mankind.

But you still have your objection on the whole—
 “ Will not raising so high, and dwelling so long
 “ on the Dignity of Man, occasion pride ?” No ;
 on the reverse, a due sense of it will necessitate humility. Pride springs from a conceit, which an individual has of his superiority over some others of the same species. The dignity I speak of is equally the dignity of *all* men ; and what levels, cannot exalt. It will *necessitate* humility ; because without *that*, it cannot preserve itself ; our native dignity will die in the result. As for that dignity which occasions your objection, we have, I confess, too much of it. We have in abundance what may be called *lunar* great men. Men in themselves opaque, who borrow beams, from their circumstances, or situation ; which beams they shew, like the moon, by night : I mean, when ignorance prevails ; then the darkened understandings of their admirers give them leave to shine.

These lunar grandees have generally many little surrounding satellites, that help, by their adulations, to gild their opacity. But of such great men, who are forced to *assume* (as men must plunder who would be gainers where nothing is due), it must be said, that the greatest of them would be greater still, if they would only please to be a little less.

They only have *solar*, or self-born light, who live up to the dignity of their nature. Their light is not only their own, and illustrious; but inextinguishable, and eternal. These, as they are the greatest, are also the most humble of mankind. For they well know, that our grandeur is to be looked for in the love of GOD, not in the merit of man. And therefore they set it down as a maxim, (and a maxim most true and useful it is), “no man ever thought too highly of his Nature, or too meanly of Himself.”

Here would I cease. But how hard to get loose from this ever-teeming, all-important, and inexhaustible theme? It fills with serene joy the superior region of the soul; and denies entrance to the clouds and storms of worldly perturbation and care. Such the height of its joy, that music, and wine, leave the raised hearts of our sons of delight, far, far below. And yet how is this glorious subject, in most minds, by the love of the world, close compress'd, and folded up, as an oak in an acorn. or a man in the womb? To develope, and expand it, how great my desire! In which of its thousand shining lights shall I set it, for our final contemplation of its mighty moment to man?

Man is the most noble study of man. Let him circle the globe, let him traverse the skies; and then, for something more worthy his notice and admiration, return to himself. To himself he is a theatre immense: and was reputed such, when that theatre had much less to exhibit, than at present it can boast; and when it was but faintly illumi-

nated with the glimmering beams of far more noble lights. The so renowned *know thyself*, was nothing but a precept enjoining a close inspection and survey of this theatre ; yet that precept, as to its author, was held divine ; and as to its practice, the supreme wisdom of man. That precept is now exalted into an awful command from Heaven ; and that theatre is consecrated into a venerable temple ; a temple of the Holy Spirit.

As in some pieces of perspective, by the pressure of the eye, so in this temple, by the pressure or perseverance of thought, the magnificent prospect is opened and aggrandized still more and more ; and opening discovers the full Dignity of Man. In what does that consist ? In the marvelous things the Almighty has done, and designed for him. And if so, this survey gives at once the greatest *virtue*, and the greatest blessing of life. For who can see those marvelous things without an ardent *love of God*, which is the supreme virtue of man ? And who can reflect on such indulgence past, without an *absolute trust* in *such* a friend for the future ; which of man is the supreme blessing ?

But this blessing, and this virtue, this glory and comfort of life, is lost to those to whom this temple is shut. And it is shut to the careless and ignorant ; to the slothful and unawakened, in the most illustrious theory of the Christian religion. If therefore such men, in what has been advanced, shall find any thing like a key to this yet unopened temple ; and shall enter its sacred and surprising recesses, and read the wonders of divine love in it ; that is, in

themselves, in their own condition and prospects ; if they shall see and contemplate the three Persons of the Godhead, before creation assuming, and through time's whole length exercising their separate parts and provinces of philanthropy ; and shall behold an innumerable flight of Angels for ever on the wing to receive their commands, and speed away, on various dispatches, for the temporal and eternal welfare of man——How should I rejoice ? For such a key would be next in value to the key of heaven. It opens the porch, the preliminary scene to it. Therefore have I kept it on the anvil so long ; and yet how unfinished at last ? May some master hand accomplish, and multitudes open the yet absolutely unknown scene of their own nature and blessed destination with it.

And now, my friend, tell me, how must his love of glory fail ; how must his *ambition* creep, who, after the strong inspiration of such a view as this, miserably confines it beneath the sun ? Consider this view, and see how high human nature may soar ; then look down on the Centaur, and see (if thou canst bear the sight) how low the sons of Heaven may fall ? Shall a being whose interests spread so wide as to take in both ends of the creation ; shall a being deeply concerned in what was done in the days of *Adam*, and more deeply still, in what shall be done in the great day of consummation ; shall such an expansive, and far-interested being, with the most sordid and despicable self-denial, and the most inconceivably criminal *poverty of spirit*, imprison his stifled thought, and rail

down his little heart to the narrow span of this present life? GOD forbid. If there is the least sense of dignity, or fear of shame; the least spark of man alive, let us consider that we are not only the favourites, but the sons too, of Heaven, and obey in this our voyage of human life, as *Aeneas* in his from *Troy*, the *Delian* oracle,

Antiquam exquerite matrem. VIRG.

But our overwhelming shame, and almost incurable misery, is, that we are so *carnalized* by our lusts, that our heavenly * Mother, in our esteem, has no blessing for us; that a *spiritual* paradise, is no paradise; that it is a paradise we wish lost; one from which we desire to fall; and to wallow, *Epicuri de grege porci*, in our beloved mire. And yet what is this spot of earth which so swallows us up, and in its gulph of obscenities extinguishes our love of Heaven? Its enchantment is very short. A few days, a few hours, may make us as wise as *Solomon*. For rest assured, earth's rankest idolater, who *now*, perhaps, in our flourishing school of infidelity, thinks a wiser than *Solomon* is here, will, at the close of life, in his aching heart, ask *Solomon's* pardon for not believing him before.

I believe that wise and experienced prince, whose wisdom and experience was designed to spare future ages their own fatal experience in folly; and closing with his *last* sentiment, the sum of his divine philosophy, affirm, that many a philosopher may justly be reputed a fool; that as there is but one GOD, one trial, one great tribunal, one salva-

* Gal. iy. 26.

tion ; so there is but one wisdom ; that all, which devoid of *that*, assumes the name, is but folly of different colours, and degrees ; gay, grave, wealthy, lettered, domestic, political, civil, military, recluse, ostentatious, humble, or triumphant : and is so called in the language of angels, in the sole-authentic, and unalterable style of *eternity*.

That awful word inspires ; and awakens ideas that slept before : it points to heaven ; and shews me where I fail.—Tho' studious to do it justice, I have wronged my theme. And wronged it much. Somewhat more is wanting, to consummate and crown the dignity of man. What have I advanced ? “ That man is *near* to the blessed angels ? ” Is he not more ? —Yes, most adorable Jesus ! man is more ; much more. O whither dost thou call me ? whither dost thou transport astonished human thought ? I scarce dare look up to the summit of such stupendous love. Leave I not cherubim and seraphim below ? ye first-born of light ! ye thrones ! dominions ! principalities ! and powers ! What do I behold ? how awed, and how raptured ; with what prostration of heart, what elevation of joy, from this remote region, this lowest vale of the creation, this land of darkness, and shadow of death, look I up through incumbent clouds of misery and sin, and behold—a *man* in heaven ! in the highest heaven ! in union with the Most High ! in union with *your* most adored, and eternal King ! and so throned in authority, to *you* so superior in power, as to make ceaseless intercession for the rest of mankind ; not for *those* whose fall left seats

empty in heaven : oh aid me with *your* language, with words more than human to praise him ! that advocate unwearied for his relations (proud language !) for his earth-born relations, and friends, below.

Is not this *almost* too much for human modesty to mention ? for human frailty to credit ? for human corruption to admit ?—But is it not also *far* too much for human gratitude to leave unproclaimed, unresounded, unadored ? *I go to my Father, and your Father, to my GOD, and your GOD.* What heart-subduing, thought-overwhelming, man-exalting words are these ? what an amazing, I had almost said *levelling*, condescension of the Deity ! what an amazing, I had almost said what a *deifying*, sublimation of man !

O blessed revelation ! that opens such wonders. O dreadful revelation ! if it opens them in vain. And are there those with whom they go for nought ? Strange men ! in possession of a blessing, the bare hopes of which supported the spirits of the wise, for four thousand years, under all the calamities of life, and terrors of death ; and know they not that it is in their hands ? or knowing, cast it away as of no value ? A blessing, the very shadow of which made the body of the patriarchal and Jewish religion ! a blessing, after which the whole earth panted, as the hart for the water-brooks ! a blessing on which the heavenly host were sent to congratulate mankind ; and sing the glad tidings into their transported hearts ! a blessing, which

was more than an equivalent for paradise lost ! and is this blessing declined, rejected, exploded, despised, ridiculed ? Oh unhappy men !—The frailty of man is almost as incomprehensible as the mercies of GOD.

Who then can inculcate too much the Dignity of Man ? for what equally to a due sense of it can inspire a contempt of the world, a fondness for which occasions the madness I deplore ? Indeed a due sense of it, evidently, includes the whole of our duty. It inspires high veneration, and great gratitude, to GOD, who gave it ; it inspires a reverence for ourselves, which is of utmost moment to our character and peace ; and it inspires a proper regard for all mankind, as equal sharers in it : which regard would prevent infinite mischief, and banish half the miseries of life.

This, its universal use, its nature so pregnant of good effects, determined me to the choice of this too much neglected subject. And perhaps, I have now set it in the strongest light. But if not ; its importance is such that it should be set in all lights, and from every point that imagination can suggest, and reason authorize, strike, if possible, the degenerate, deeply-sunk, and ever-groveling human heart. He that looks not on man in the light above, or some light similar and equivalent, knows not himself ; is a perfect stranger at home ; his heart wanders an exile from his destined felicity ; he deprives himself of the powerful impulse which he so much wants, and which nature denies, and which revelation designed him, for his more vigor-

ous advance in virtue here ; and his more sublime ascent in glory hereafter : which two are the whole of his happiness ; all the rest is extrinsic, precarious, transient, and inevitably mortal.

And who will dare say, that he who declines, or falls from the noble and elevating object of contemplation abovementioned, and the glorious hopes it inspires, into the barren field of amusement, and trifle ; or into the bestial abyss of a few years debauch, for his portion ; who will dare affirm, that such a wretch differs not as much in reason and happiness from the true Christian, as a *quadruped* differs, in form, from a man ? It is not form, but manners, which make humanity. The mould in which we are cast, only says what we *should be* ; nothing but our conduct tells us what *we are*. What wretches are they who contradict their figure ; and accuse nature of having set a wrong stamp on their lying clay ? The most despicable and deplorable being under heaven, is a Pagan in a Christian land. He is like a rank growth of poison in paradise. He confines that thought which should set out at the creation, and travel down, with wonder and adoration at every step, thro' the countless mercies and miracles of GOD, for man, into nature's final dissolution ; and thence launch for a never-ending voyage in a blessed eternity,—to the nothing of threescore years ; and the wretched means of annihilating that nothing, of contracting that span. Lust exhausts, luxury overwhelms, and, by heaping on fuel, quite puts out the fire.

Where is that *dignity* which reason exacts, and

which revelation exalts, in man? In what I have said on that subject, I have, I think, done more to our purpose, than he who measures the heavens, and numbers the stars. I have taken (as I conceive) the true measure of man. That extensive measure rising above the skies, which the Centaur dwarfs down to the scanty span of the brute creation, to the *bestiatriumphanti*; and making (might I so speak) a dunghill of our condition, with the cock in the fable, for a grain of sensuality, spurns the jewel away; the powers angelic, the radiant beams of the Divinity, in the *real* man.

But while I contemplate his grandeur (so mixt our nature, so great, and little is man), I feel his weakness: in mind, and body, I feel his infirmities—Pain, this instant, stops my pen—stops it short of what I had proposed to say.—It bids me take, while I may, my leave of him I love.—I take a solemn, because, perhaps a final leave. It is at least possible, we may meet no more. No more in this foreign land; in this gloomy apartment of the boundless universe of God.

O thou the last, the strongest hold that earth has on me! my friend in JESUS CHRIST! my rival in immortal hope! and my companion (I trust) for eternity! come to my bosom: though so far remote, I take thee to my heart. Souls suffer no separation from obstruction of matter, or distance of place; oceans may roll between us, and climates interpose, in vain. The whole material creation is no bar to the winged mind. Farewell.—Through boundless ages fare thou well. The Dignity of

Man, and blessing of heaven, be with thee! the broad hand of the Almighty cover thee! Mayst thou shine, when the sun is quench'd! mayst thou live, and triumph, when time expires!

This cordial duty done, this human debt discharged, my mind is eased, my spirits revive; my pain is less. And when this endless letter is ended, I shall drop thee for *the present*; and this idle pen, and an idler world (that other feather in the scale of eternity) *for ever*. He that drops the world, before that drops him, he *only* knows its real value; and the value of his own soul. And whatever the gaiety of the world pretends to, he *only* can have a solid, permanent, and uninterrupted joy of heart, who builds it on the rock; on hope of the divine mercy. Give a man the world, and give him no more; and his happiness is at end: the human heart will necessarily feel a futurity, thro' all the superabundance earth can heap on it: nothing can possibly give it a peace independent of an hereafter: that point of view in his creation, that purchase of blood in his redemption, and yet, in human conduct, that ever neglected *all* of man.

Ask the last bill of mortality; ask pleasure's or ambition's triumph most triumphant, what is human life? knowledge of the world recommends recess; knowledge of life reconciles to the grave. Few sufficiently consider how great mercy is implied in the grant of death. With a heart quite disengaged, its cable cut, imploring a smooth passage, and gentle gale, bound for that port whence none return, I wait the mighty MASTER's call.

That call irresistible, which every moment should expect; which every fool forgets; every knave dreads; every wise man welcomes; and every monarch obeys.

And yet, my friend, some of our few coevals close not altogether with this way of thinking; but rather seem to judge, that some little degree of precipitation may be laid to its charge. As the dial knows not the hour it points out; so they, by their infirmities and decays, discover their time of day to all but themselves. Their desires grow stronger, as enjoyments grow more coy. It is somewhat to be feared, that their hearts gravitate almost as much as their scarce-animated clay, and take but few and feeble flights above the level of the world, though very excellent things are spoken of thee, thou welcome *haven* of eternal rest! thou delightful region of inextinguishable love! thou great goal of perfection! thou bright meridian of glory! thou boundless ocean of *unrepenting pleasure*! thou city of God!

And is man invited to this fulness of fruition? and is man *importuned* to partake the glories of the Almighty?—He that weighs not well this transcendent height of love divine, is far from being able to comprehend the terrible depth of human guilt. And what guilt so deep as that of a *baptized* infidel? A rank heathen rising out of the sacred font, is *reason's* greatest shock, the deepest wound of rectitude, the blackest brand of earth, the sigh of angels, a second spear in the side of the most

bleſſed JESUS, and the ſupreme triumph of the foe to GOD and man.

Moſt gracious GOD! in *happineſs* and *dignity*, how widely diſtant is man from man? In both, what an immense ſuperiority has the pious believer? ſcarce ſeems of the ſame ſpecies the believing, and apoſtate world. To the *firſt*, how juſtly may we cry out, O ye happy ſons of the fallen *Adam*! where is the damage you received from your father's fall? Where are the once lamented miſeries of life? where are the once unſurmountable terrors of death fled? I diſcern the dignity of man, when his carcaſe is in the duſt. I congratulate his happineſs while the worm is feaſting on him. Rejoice, O ye dead! exult and ſing, ye dark inhabitants of the grave! For do I not behold, even in the grave, the comfort of heaven, when, with an eye of Chriſtian faith, in heaven I behold a *man*? the man CHRIST JESUS? and, with tranſport and adoration let me reſound the lofty language of the prophet,—*A man the fellow of the Almighty* *.

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AND now, my friend! let us conſider how deplorably wretched is that man amongſt us, who is deaf to *ſuch* a voice, and blind to *ſuch* a ſight? and how criminally wretched is he, if he voluntarily declines them! if he voluntarily recalls the ſuſpended curſe; obſtinately preſents diſarmed death with his mortal ſting again; and pours out, in his

* Zachar. xiii. 7.

distraction, all the vials of its original bitterness on the days, how dismal and unredeemed, of an apostate human life? what a formidable *revelation* does such a man bespeak in lieu of that which brought pardon and peace? what a revelation of no glad tidings awaits him, when his now-involving cloud breaks, and truth thunders on the dreadfully illumined soul, at the no-distant hour of death?

It is, indeed, in man's option, which of these *revelations* he will admit, (one he must); but it is not in man's wisdom to make the least apology for a wrong option in so plain and important a point. A point how plain? I shall here just touch on a single proof of the truth of Christianity, which renders any further proof, among proofs innumerable, unnecessary with me, to create and support our Christian faith.

Every thing in the *natural* world is a proof of a GOD; and almost every thing in the *moral* world is a proof of a revelation. As, in the material universe, all exactly corresponds with the previous ideas of it in the divine mind; and in a substantial copy renders legible to man its invisible pattern, in the thought of the ALMIGHTY; so a complete history of mankind (if such could be had) would be little more than the same ALMIGHTY's *prophetic* word in scripture, materialized into fact. The prophets are more accurate and authentic historians of the *future*, than the most happy genius, uninspired, can possibly be of the *past*. And want we *miracles* for our conviction? The series of scripture-prophecies accomplished, is the most striking of miracles: it is

a miracle not expiring in a transient act ; but of great longevity, persisting in a perpetually-encreasing weight and validity, through the protracted course of many thousand years. It is a living, growing, permanent, paramount miracle, lighted up as a lamp of illumination for all ages ; that all able to see, might be quite unable to disbelieve ; quite unable to retain reason, and, at the same time, renounce belief. For if the scripture-prophecies are fulfilled, the scripture is the word of God ; and if the scripture is the word of God, Christianity cannot be false. Shall we reject it as false, when, in the present fate of almost all nations, we are surrounded, and condemned, by a full ocular demonstration of its being true ? let us dispute our own existence, if we would continue of a piece with this.

Where is our natural curiosity ? and that, in points which concern us most ? would we know what we *are* ; or what we *may*, or *must* be to all eternity ? Nothing but revelation can tell us either. So that if we acted on no higher motive than mere instinct, revelation would be precious in our sight. But vice extinguishes not our reason only, but our instinct too, when it would do us any good. Either the strongest instinct of curiosity is extinguished by it, or there is an astonishing and pernicious self-denial in infidels, if their most natural curiosity is still alive. Revelation was written for our instruction ; and are we too wise to be instructed by God himself ? throw we by unread, and as of no conse-

quence, an unsealed letter sent to us from the ALMIGHTY ?

In our Infidels it is no less than defiance of common sense, no less than hardened impudence to the nature of man, to pretend, that, on due enquiry, they want proof of the truth of the gospel. Its proof is not only great, but amazing; it is not only sufficient to convince, but astonish: such its accumulated, overwhelming evidence, so truly *marvellous its light*, that if rejected, it lays us under a necessity of rejecting reason, and revelation, together. And is not *reason obeyed*, the sole dignity, glory, grandeur, of gods, and men? Nothing can so much degrade as the violation of reason; and no violation of reason is equal to a wrong option in this point supreme. Too faint is the strongest colouring of all the severe fables of antiquity, to reach an absurdity so absurd.

That of *Circe's* stye, and *Chiron's* stud, falls short of the mark. For reason, in those days, had not such powerful motives to combat, or such glaring lights to resist. And guilt blackens, in proportion to the strength of the lights resisted, and the motives overcome.

Since then (as has been proved) if reason makes a man, by ceasing to be Christians, they cease to be men; by what term shall we call those, whom no term can defame? Let, therefore, your offended sister pardon my parable; and let no honest man, for the future, so far offend propriety, and profane our language, as to join in one abused word such repugnant ideas, as those of the Centaur and the

man: *one* the idea of a being, horridly rejoicing in the miserable and mistaken thought, that this short life, shortened by vice and vanity, is his all; and that, like the snuff of a candle, it shall go out for ever; rejoicing to think, that after all his bustle and ambition, he shall only, by his *putrid carcase*, add rankness to a clod of earth, and defile the dirt. The *other* idea is that of a being big with humble, but triumphant, hope, of exalting, with his *immortal spirit*, joy celestial; of adding melody to seraphic choirs, in ceaseless hallelujahs to their eternal King. "Sing praises, sing praises to our God; "sing praises, sing praises to our King. Praise him, "all ye angels! Praise him, all his host. Praise "him sun and moon! Praise him all ye stars, and "light!" For a fairer light, a nobler star, a more illustrious sun is risen: the Sun of righteousness with healing in his wings; and all the glories of unbounded creation are outshone by the smallest beam of the gospel; by the faintest hope of wrath appeased, and eternal life.

Yet this is that light, which some, in their superior wisdom, would extinguish as superfluous to man, and set up the dim taper of their reason in its stead.

O thou worst *guide, philosopher, and friend!*
Say, for thou know'st, what is it to be wise?

Essay on Man.

With equal *wisdom*, thou mightest imagine the sun superfluous and unnecessary to the material world; and call on chaos for primæval darkness, as the great blessing of mankind. Say, for *now* indeed

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thou knowest, is not *Lucifer* in the list of such benefactors as these?

Though in *this* his lordship is quite as good a friend to mankind, as he is a philosopher in his *materiality* of the soul; yet I will venture advancing towards that precious doctrine, so far, as to call, without scruple, such sort of imaginations the *thoughts of the body*; for from the body's predominance they, necessarily, rise: and that necessity proves the necessity of religion, which they resist: so that such men (which, perhaps, they are not aware of), while, as much as they can, they condemn religion, they commend it too; they as loudly call for it, as the disease for the cure. For religion is nothing, but an expedient for supporting, against the body's assaults and encroachments, the sacred interests of the soul.

At your request, Sir, in the wide-spread ruins of our *faith* and *virtue*, I have taken a slight view of a more melancholy scene, than could be presented by famine, pestilence, or the sword: but, by God's grace, we shall repent; and not suffer our greatest glory to become our greatest dread; not suffer our prime and unspeakable blessing, Immortality, to render existence the most insupportable curse. What a terrible inversion is this of the high favours of Heaven! this must be the case, when man is all *sense*: for to sense nothing exists but the *present*. Our present is so dear that our future is undone. Strange conduct! when our step *out* of life is so short; and so sure, sudden, and innumerable our accidents *in* it, that almost every moment assures

us, that, unless in time we lay hold on our *invisible*, and, to reason alone, existing GOD, we shall soon fall from all we held so dear; and that then, not only all our happiness, but all our hope, is at an end.

What is there, O my countrymen! O my friend! O my poor, endangered, immortal soul! what is there, from *Adam* to this hour, but fully confirms what I say? The world allures us; the world condemns us; he who takes that kind advice, which, through his own experience, the world conveys, will despise all its charms. As ignorance seems with infidelity, so knowledge is a fast friend of faith. If we would but know, what we cannot but know; if we would but believe our senses in what passes, and our common records in what has passed; it would not only reconcile us to, but, almost, supply the place of, our *creed*; so very natural a growth is the Christian of the man.

As natural a growth of an infidel is a beast: a beast by GOD uncreated; by *Adam* unnamed. That defect *Adam's* meanest son has supplied, by writing CENTAUR in the horrid gap, which the bold infidel has made, by the desperate erasure of his Christian name.

Is this thought too opprobrious, and a term of reproach?—I will make some amends by a short hint of advice, which may save from reproach the whole length of their lives. “Let not the brute
“any longer run away with the man, lest some-
“thing more dreadful should run away with the
“brute.”

If this advice is refused, as *Alexander* said of the *Persian* effeminate army, *there are many enemies, but few soldiers*; so say I, of this *Paphian* isle, *there are a multitude of people, but a small remnant of men*. And of all brutes the most brutal is the volunteer in brutality; the brute self-made; the brute not from the decree, but abuse of nature; the *strange* brute-affrighting brute, with the stature, vesture, voice, and face of man; the brute *mysterious*, irrationally rational, and (with horror let me speak it), *deplorably* immortal.

Does the *Centaur* still sound too harsh in their ears? I will so far indulge them, as to change it for *Slave*; and instead of making free with their hides, only rattle their chains. For chains they wear, galling, infamous chains! Till stubborn and wild will is broken by grace and reason, no man is free; but madly prefers the heavy burdens of his lusts, and the scourges of conscience, to the glorious liberty of the sons of GOD.

And is it possible that *pride* should be the growth of slavery? They are proud of bondage, triumph in infamy, and imagine that in their high flights of folly, and riot unrestrained, there is something great. No man is great, till he sees that every thing in this world is little. And of all that is little, that *they* are the least. Would they know what is greatness? Great is he, and he alone, who makes the whole creation, and its amazing cause, the *circumference*, and his own *true* interest, the *centre* of his thoughts. Who has strength and steadiness, to weigh in perpetual and equal balance,

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right and wrong, body and soul, time and eternity, nature and God; and so weighing, to disdain any *very* anxious thought, for less than the greatest good his limited nature admits, and his all-powerful God has promised to bestow: that God, *whose are the pillars of the earth, and who has set the world upon them; who in his wrath thunders out of heaven, and his adversaries are broken to pieces.*

In *this*, Sir, in giving our supreme good, our supreme effort and concern, in spite of all temptation, lies the greatness of man. Well may it lie in a prudence, *such* a prudence, as angels cannot exceed. If this is wanting, vain are all other pretensions to greatness, whether of king, hero, or philosopher. And a *Caesar*, a *Mariborough*, a *Newton*, a *Bolingbroke*, a *Fidler*, *Tumbler*, and *Scaramouch*, may be thrown together into one promiscuous heap, of equal impotence for attaining true greatness. The *performance*, indeed, of each of these candidates for glory, the multitude may admire; but the *performer*, at the same time, will be condemned by the wise, as little-minded and mean; nay, as a *very fool*, in the language of Scripture; that is, in the judgment of God.

You see, therefore, to what titles of renown our *fine men*, on the strictest enquiry, may put in a just pretence: fool! slave! centaur!—The last is the newest, and (which would be well for them) may be the least understood; but let them chuse which they please. Were it referred to me, their anti-christian glory should be quite aggrandized, and

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shine, like his *Holiness*, triple-crowned with all three.

To that tremendous Power, which *alone* is truly great and good ; in whose favour is all light, life, hope, peace, joy, and salvation ; be thanks, praise, and dominion over the *rebel, fool, slave, and centaur*, in our hearts. And may our hearts, thus exercised, have a lively *feeling* of the GOD invisible ; and, panting for the rivers of *true pleasure* at his right hand, abhor the *life in vogue* ; and in *faith* unshaken, and *virtue* unfeigned, be confirmed for evermore : nor longer (to the reproach eternal of the present age) let our sins, as well as our situation, proclaim us to be

—*Toto divisos orbe Britannos.* VIRG.

But, to damp my rising hope, I know not if *another* distinction of *Britons* from the greatest part of mankind, may not have been the glorious indeed, but fatal cause of this most ignominious effect. It is the great glory of GOD to draw good out of evil. To draw evil out of good is the great infamy of man.

I suspect, that an insolent pride in *British* liberty, in some measure, inspires *British* licence of thought, and extravagance of opinion ; which as extravagant a practice for ever follows : if so, vice and infidelity are as much our *national* distempers, as the scurvy, or the spleen. Though discretion much befriends happiness, happiness is no friend to discretion. Great blessings intoxicate. Liberty, fraught with blessings as it is, when *unabused*, has, perhaps, been abused to our destruction. And as

British malt, sublimated into the most pernicious liquor, now so much in use, so *British* liberty, carried into licentiousness, has poisoned and brutalised the *British* state. By too much exalting our spirits, it corrupts our manners; and that glory of our constitution is the disgrace of our lives. Purely to prove themselves *free men*, some turn infidels: hanging themselves would be as good, and, to the public, a less pernicious proof. Such men should perform a long quarantine ere admitted to the embrace even of a brother. Heaven preserve thee, my friend, from the freedom, and wisdom, and happiness now in vogue. He is most free who is bound by the laws; he is most wise who owns himself weak; he is most happy who abridges his *pleasures*; and he is most magnanimous, O ye bold, intrepid, heaven-defying, *Britons!* who fears his GOD.

He, indeed, is the most magnanimous; for by that fear he is fortified against all other. And he is *by far* the most happy; for the divine favour, the light of GOD's countenance, is the *sun* of the human soul, whence all its vegetation of real felicity; and though the world, (which from him receives all its feeble rays) may greatly shine in our eyes, yet, as wisely may we expect vigorous and vivifying heat from the moon, as any *solid* satisfaction from it.

But just one word to the busy, ambitious, learned, and gay. Vice and virtue excepted, no man on earth can say, what is good or ill; in as great a tumult and uproar as your passions are, O ye *busy!* and *ambitious!* about every thing *else*: and to love, and labour at, what GOD commands, and to

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desire, and hope, what he promises, is the single great lesson, O ye *learned!* and the single true pleasure, O ye *gay!* of human life.

And, now, my friend, farewell. I must trust myself no longer with the pen; for while I think there is a possibility, that, touched by some happy stroke, but one fellow-mortal may be raised from a perishing *man of the earth*, to a blessed immortal, my busy mind perpetually suggests new hints, and my heart knows not how to refrain from pursuing them. The volume grows upon my hands, till its very bulk would defeat its end. New rays of thought dart in upon me, which, like cross lights, confound and perplex each other. Something of this you may have perceived already. Even Centaurs *have been* human, and I feel the strong tie of humanity, when going to bid them a last, an everlasting farewell. Like one about to leave unhappy friends in the midst of a destruction, which yet, by timely care, they might escape, still, at the moment of departure, some new caution occurs to me, some new exhortation, something unsaid, or not so well said, as it might have been. But now, the adieu must be final. With only this additional, and still more urgent, and to them surprizing, motive for reformation, (*viz.*) my assuring them, that what I have hitherto, through tenderness, allowed to pass for fable, is actual fact. That the Centaur is *indeed* not fabulous. That a man without religion is *really* a beast; and such is he pronounced in scripture, where it is said that * *he also is*

* Gen. vi.

flesh; that is, is a brute! and, (what should strike them not a little) this is assigned as the reason for sweeping away our degenerate race by the flood. A brute, in truth, he is, with this only difference, that his superior understanding gives him more venom than the most envenomed of serpents; and enables him to do more fatal mischief to himself, and others, than without the curse of reason, of abused reason, could possibly be done. So far therefore is it from satire, that kind admonition is all, which the word Centaur implies. And as in some words there was once imagined to reside a magic power over *daemons* themselves, that opinion might still prevail, if the design of these letters, to the wish of all honest men, could succeed, and the foul nature of the Centaur be cast out by the name. If this should be the fortunate event, these pages would live in the lives of those they shall reclaim. And if so, O *Bolingbroke*! and you, his applauding idolizers! what to *this* is that vain immortality which the meanest writers wish, and which the noblest can scarce attain? Praise is an error, where pardon is indulgence; and pardon is indulgence to the brightest parts misapplied. They rather provoke, than please, the worthy mind, by laying it under the disagreeable necessity, and clashing dispositions, of admiring the writer, and disapproving the man. Which, in some sort, is like admiring *Nero* for his fiddle, when, thro' his own frenzy, his glorious capital was in flames.

I am, my dear friend,

Nov. 29. 1754.

Truly yours.

P O S T S C R I P T.

I Received your objections, and thank you for them. I believe every judicious reader will make the same. All I can say, for mitigation of their censure, is, that they who take on them to read lectures in this laughing age, if they wish an audience but moderately large, must have weight enough to make impression on the serious; and levity enough to catch those wanton ears, which, unless tickled by that feather, would continue shut as close as their silly hearts are to virtue, though an angel should take the chair.

I know you are so kindly concerned for your friend's reputation, that the mixture of levity with solemnity, in these letters, makes you apprehensive of its exposing the writer to censure or ridicule. Yet, how is it possible to write on so dreadfully mixed a subject, as the ways of man, without being agitated by the most contradictory emotions? His follies, so fantastically wrong, so ludicrously absurd: his capacities for virtue and happiness, so noble: his vices so shocking: their consequence so deplorable.—So earnestly desirous I am of waking him from that dream, in which he nods upon the brink of eternal ruin, that if nothing can do it but my own disgrace, my own *buffoonery* (as perhaps he will think it), I rejoice to fall so low. If he will but laugh *with* me, at *himself*, he is freely welcome to laugh *at* me, as much as he sees cause. It is not his applause, but his welfare, that is sought. *Amendment* is the point in view. That point

unproposed, (and could the * Viscount propose it?) all censure is mere malice, and mere impertinence is all harangue; and entitles a *Tully*, a *Bollingbroke*, and a parrot, to just the same portion of our esteem and applause. Would you, my friend, judge aright of men, ask not *what* they have done, but *why*; or their characters will be still in the dark.—But I fear I am setting your judgment of men too right for my own intrest; I must leave it under the power of some partiality, for the sake of your humble servant.

Pardon one word more. † *Centaur* is of Greek extraction, and signifies stimulation. May it here prove (as intended) a spur to virtue; and, most, in myself. Standing in awe of my own pen, may I take the counsel I give: thus only can I be *sure* of doing any good; thus only can I boldly say, without the reader's leave, that I have not writ in vain. Is not this a new expedient for writing to some little purpose? and an expedient of no small service to the public, if all our writers would use the same? Their numbers, then, would be less a nuisance; and half the nation (blessed change!) would aim at virtue, as well as fame. This, too, might be some sort of apology for those heroes of the pen, who, dauntless at their own danger, with the spirit of a *Curtius*, for the sake of their dear country, leap headlong into the press, (too hasty patriots!) and perish there.

Vincit amor patriae, laudamque immensa cupido.

VIRG.

* Lord *Bollingbroke*.† From *Centaur*, stimulate.

A
VINDICATION
OF
PROVIDENCE:
OR, A
TRUE ESTIMATE
OF
HUMAN LIFE.

IN WHICH
The PASSIONS are considered in a
New Light.

T O T H E
Q U E E N.

MADAM,

IF the following discourse is as happy in its execution, as it is important in its design, it will not be (give me leave to say) altogether unworthy of a royal patronage.

The design is of great consequence, and I think new : it is to remove a prevailing and inveterate mistake, which first sprang, and now thrives in a soil too indulgent to it ; and a soil too difficultly subdued, the *pride*, and *ill-nature*, and *melancholy*, and *vice* of mankind. I mean, Madam, that false opinion, that reflection on providence, “ That this world is, in its own

“ nature, that is, by GOD's appointment, a

“ world of sorrow, a scene of misery, a vale of

“ tears ; and that, to *be* in it, is to *be wretched*

“ unavoidably.” Whereas this treatise shall endeavour to make it manifest, that providence is not only gracious in the composition, studious of the accommodation, preventive of the acci-

DEDICATION.

dents, corrective of the mistakes, and liberal to the wants, but lavish also to the luxuries of man; and that God does not only permit, but *enable* us, and not only enable, but *enjoin* us to be happy; happy, to a much greater degree than we are, that is, than we *chuse* to be.

Nor is that error I combat, an error of the vulgar, unlearned, or sinful only; but the learned, wise, and good, have fatally contributed their sacred authority towards the propagation and establishment of it: either through inadvertency, or the resentment of *present* pain, or an indiscreet, though well-intended zeal, in the commendation of a better world.

Most of them have, as it were casually, let fall from their pens, which pursued some other principal point, too severe and unguarded intimations to the discredit of our *present* State: *many* have made an invective on this life, a *general* drift that mingled itself in all their discourses and conversations: and *some* have made it their *particular* theme; and avowedly, determinately, and strictly drove at this very point; without adjoining the true causes, the proper cures, the right uses, and salutary effects of our misfortunes and pains; and thus have left *grounds* of future argument against the *goodness*, and thrown a present cloud over the *glory* of the great Disposer of events, the *King* of *time*, and of *eternity*.

DEDICATION.

Let, Madam, one of his most shining representatives on earth patronize and vindicate a *vindication of His providence*; let one of the principal ornaments of human life indulge a *true estimate of it*; let her graciously defend a *refutation of an error which flows from a decay of that faith*, of which our dread sovereign is the great *defender*; and which leads to a corruption of that *morality*, of which her own correct conduct is the distinguished *glory*. Let that Queen, who is nearly concerned in the *sad occasion* that turned my thought on this subject, take it into her protection; her *protection* will recommend it to the world, and her *example* will supply the defects of this composition on it.

And, Madam, as your *example will* assist me, so that good providence, whose ways I presume to assert, grant, that your fortune *may* too! That your most sacred majesty, from this joyful and unclouded *morning* of your reign, may shine forth a long and illustrious *day*, as an unanswerable *instance of temporal happiness*, and an unquestionable *heir of eternal*, is the constant and fervent prayer of,

MADAM,

Your Majesty's most obedient,

And most dutiful subject,

E. YOUNG.

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The PREFACE.

I Know not well why, but the *passions* are a favourite subject with mankind : the reason may possibly be, because men are much concerned with them, both as to themselves and others ; and where we have a *self-concern*, we have an *attention*. Or, because they are such powerful and universal springs, that almost all the pleasures, pains, designs, and actions of life are owing to them ; and therefore it is our *interest* to *know* them well : or, because every man carrying them in his own breast, he thinks he knows them well *already*, and is therefore an able judge of *such* compositions ; and thus his *pride* has a fondness for them : or, because the *passions*, like the boy at the fountain, fall in love with their own representation : or, because many are all passion ; and if men consider a treatise on the *passions* as a history of themselves, it is no wonder they read it with pleasure. Or, because what a most celebrated *ancient* writ on this subject is lost, to the great regret of the learned and polite world, which is studious of some reparation of that loss ; and the more so, because what other *ancients* have left on that head, is imperfect and short.

Being sensible how difficult it is to gain *attention* for works of Divinity, I have insisted more on the *Passions* than any other head of the following discourse ; in hopes of a more welcome reception prepared for it, by that general taste or disposition of heart, which I have mentioned. I have marked the *distinctions* and *peculiarities* of the *passions*, with some care.

A *French* author has treated of them with such accuracy and applause, that it conciliated to him the particular favour of a celebrated Queen, who wept for the death of the *author* of that piece, though she had never seen the *man*.

P R E F A C E.

But he had a wrong byass on him through the *whole*, to the prejudice of it; nor could I reap any advantage from him beside that of having such an example of industry and discernment; of which, what use I have made, I do not hope, but *fear* the reader will too easily perceive. That author indeed displays the passions at large, and pursues them into all their several branches; whereas I could find room for the primary, or radical passions only, at present: but they may one day shoot, under her majesty's benign influence, (who like the queen abovementioned, is the greatest encourager of arts), and give that *one tree* of human knowledge its entire growth.

But as imperfect as the discourse now is, (of which I am very sensible), I persuade myself the reader will find an uncommon variety in it: and that the observations, which are by no means drawn from books, but the life, are so far just, that any one who is at the pains of looking on them, may possibly find truths which his own experience can attest; and thus be a *witness*, as well as a *judge* of what is here written: he may find some traces, some features of his own condition, as the *Trojan* met his own picture on a foreign shore. I wish (a rare wish in a writer) that I could be refuted in what is here advanced; for some of the truths are very melancholy. I hope the great *length* will be excused, since the nature of the subject might easily have betrayed me into a much greater transgression against the common limits of this kind of writing.

If this piece in any tolerable degree answer its *title*, a perusal will not be *thrown away* upon it. For I look on it as one of the *desiderata* in literature, and that of the nearest and most general concern to man.

A
TRUE ESTIMATE
OF
HUMAN LIFE.

COLOSS. iii. 2.

Set your affections on things above, and not on things on the earth.

W by no means question, but that the birth, and life, and death, and resurrection of our LORD, were acts of infinite merit; merit sufficient to satisfy God's justice, and bring sinners to the terms of reconciliation and salvation: but we must not imagine, that they wrought any change or confusion in the nature of things. God is as pure as ever, and iniquity is as much his aversion: though he can be reconciled to *sinners*, he cannot be reconciled to *sin*; and though the sinner may be saved, he cannot be *saved* unless he, first, be *changed*; for heaven has no more admittance for corruption, than it had before. And therefore the unchangeable holiness of God requires, that, notwithstanding all our LORD has done to save us, we should still *work out our own salvation*, by a conformity to his example, as well as a dependence on his *merit*: nor, most

impiously, make his merit an encouragement of sin.

For this reason, the Christian is called on to be born, to live, to die, and to rise again, in a *moral* sense; for in the *natural*, all these acts are acts of necessity. These expressions import so many several stages in the Christian course.

By *nature* we are born of flesh and blood, which gives us a constitution fond of what is *present*, and careless of what is *future*: and therefore, to secure the future, we are told, that the Spirit of God is a new principle of life, which, when received into the soul, will impress on it new thoughts, new aims, and new desires; and to receive this principle, and these impressions, is the Christian *birth*.

By *nature* we live a life of sense and self-will, which is destructive of our eternal interest; and therefore we are enjoined to take the will of CHRIST for our rule, and his practice for our example; and this is the Christian *life*.

By *nature* we die through a separation of soul and body; but this separation makes it well with none, with whom it was not well before; and therefore we are enjoined to die to sin; and this is the Christian *death*.

By *nature* (or by God's appointment in nature) we are to rise again, whether we will or no; but nothing that is of pure force can produce an effect to any one's spiritual advantage; and therefore are we to rise by choice; that is, by *setting our affections on things above*; and this is the Christian *re-*

urrection; the perfection of the Christian state, and that which the text particularly calls for.

I shall begin with explaining the words. The first word in the original text contains the whole act of our duty: we translate it *set your affections*; but more is implied in it. We cannot *love* any thing without *judging* of its worth; nor can we judge of the worth of any thing, without taking it into our *thoughts*; and the word signifies each of these acts, to * *think*, to † *judge*, to ‡ *love*. Thus the whole signification of the word not only teaches us the whole *act* of our duty, but likewise the *method* necessary for the practice of it; *think*, *judge*, and then *love*.

The next words are *things above*: shewing the object of our duty. Now things above, in the style of scripture, signify the things of *grace* and the things of *glory*. The things of *grace* are holiness, justice, temperance, charity, and all other Christian virtues. Prov. x: 24. *The way of life is above to the wise, that he may depart from hell beneath*; that is, every wise man will be religious; for this is the way above. that upper, exalted way, that leads to life: but sin is the low and ignominious way; so low, that there is nothing beneath it but hell, to which it leads.

Secondly, By things above, are meant the things of *glory*; as the beatific vision of God, the presence of CHRIST, the conversation of angels, the fellowship of saints; bodies glorified, souls ennobled, faculties enlarged, and entertained with transport-

* Rom. xii. † Rom. xiv. 6. ‡ In the text.

ing objects, and replenished with unmixed joys! All these things are meant by things above; and one would imagine, that an injunction could not be ungrateful, to *set our affections on things like these.*

And yet it is ungrateful to most of us; and that for this reason, because there are things on the earth too, things contrary in their *nature*, and inconsistent in their *choice*, with the things now mentioned: pleasant things, and such whose pleasures are present, and palpable, and always at hand: pleasures of appetite and sense, those winning masters, under whose dominion we spend the first of our years, for *want* of reason; and (too often) the rest, in *spite* of it: pleasures that through their number, and opportunity, and prepossession, and custom, get such a fatal ascendant, that unless we are always on our guard against them, our love of *things above* will either never spring, or (what is all one) never come to maturity. And this is the reason of that caution superadded in the last words of the text, *not on things on the earth.*

Having thus explained the words, I proceed to shew the particular method of practising the duty contained in them; which consists (as I have already intimated) in those three acts; first, thinking of; secondly, judging; thirdly, loving the *things above.*

To *think* of them is the beginning of our duty. Nothing can act on the soul but by the mediation of thought; that which we think not of, moves us no more than that which is not: and therefore, it is

not so much the beauty, or excellency, or gratefulness, or fitness of an object, as thought that makes us love. The object brings in the matter, but thought gives the form to the passion; and if we think not of a thing, it is impossible we should love it, be it never so lovely.

If therefore we would work ourselves to a proper zeal for *things above*, it is necessary that we should allow ourselves stated seasons of thinking on them: we must call them into our mind, and make them the matter of our serious contemplation; and then the most desirable things will certainly move in us a suitable desire.

Nor is it strange that thought should be necessary to give us an *affection* for things *spiritual* and *remote*, when it is necessary to give us a *perception* of things *sensible* and *at hand*. The eye may be open on an object which it does not see; and the ear struck with sounds which it does not hear, if thought is intensely engaged another way. But small attention, indeed, is necessary, to give things sensible and present their full force on us, and this is the reason of that advantage which earthly things have on our choice above heavenly: they are immediate; their *presence* is their *power*. But religious *thought*, and that only, can rob them of this fatal advantage; which is a strong argument for the practice of this duty: thought can make absent things present, take away the distance between earth and heaven, and make an eternal good, though future, a better entertainment, and

fuller satisfaction to the mind, than all the pleasures of sin, though at hand.

I confess, indeed, since heaven forces itself on our thoughts, from a thousand occasions, whether we will or no, that many think of heaven, and yet do not desire it as much as they ought; but this I affirm, that every man desires it in proportion to his thinking: for no man but wishes for heaven, while heaven is on his mind; and if every transient glance of thought can procure a *wish*, it is a good argument, that a fixed and frequent contemplation would produce no less than an effectual *will*. If therefore we affect not heaven enough, it is because we contemplate too little.

Indeed there is one strange consideration which offers itself on this subject: since our common notion of things above represents them as infinitely preferable to all other, how is it possible that they should not ever engage our thoughts? how is it possible, that mankind, which abhors nothing so much as pain, should not be for ever meditating on that place, which we confess to be the seat of perfect exemption from it? how is it possible, that mankind, which teils out a weary life in eager pursuits of every *appearance of good*, should forget that which we confess the *supreme*? for it is too manifest, that as the thoughts of heaven, and heavenly things, enter most *rarely* into our minds, so they hang the most *loosely* there, and are soonest dislodged from their slender hold on us. Every new object, though never so trifling, foreign, or

absurd, is sufficient to divert us from the importance of them.

The holy scripture is frequent in asserting, that the devil is actually and perpetually conversant among us; his end and business being to seduce, deceive, and destroy. Nor can there be a greater human demonstration of this truth, than this instance of our thoughts, with regard to the contemplation of eternal happiness; wherein their slackness, avocations, startings, wanderings, and interruptions, are so unaccountable, so contrary to their nature and manner of attention, when applied to worldly objects, that they cannot seem to receive their conduct from any principle, either voluntary or mechanical, that is purely within ourselves, but from the extrinsic influence and injection of that evil spirit. And accordingly we find him charged, *Matt. xiii. 19* with this very fact of snatching away *good thoughts* from the heart of man.

And, indeed, if men but grant that there is such a power, and that he can tempt us (which, if we deny, we must cease to be Christians), the other follows of itself: for the *region* of the soul, in which the devil forges his wiles to deceive us, is the *imagination*; and his *manner* of working is by forming images, or exciting motions there, which become the immediate matter of our thought; and his *time* of working is then particularly, when he perceives our minds are religiously disposed; for then he is most afraid of losing his hold on us. And thence comes to pass (what I fear all of us have

perceived) that at the seasons of devotion, a languor and inattention often comes over us, which we feel neither before nor after: for then especially, he attempts our imagination, and throngs it with foreign matter. As therefore my text requires the *setting our thoughts on things above*, in order to create such a relish, and kindle such a desire as is due to them; so, in order to setting our thoughts on them, it is necessary to superadd this rule; that in the seasons assigned for such contemplation, we should always guard our thoughts with that petition in the LORD's prayer, *Deliver us from evil*, that evil-one (as it may be rendered) who is ever hovering round us, to snatch away good thoughts from our hearts.

But a persuasive to serious contemplation (and nothing less than serious contemplation is sufficient) must seem strange to so gay an age, which has distinguished itself by nothing more than by carrying diversions to their greatest and most expensive height; *diversions*, which are the reverse of serious thought: an age, which particularly may be said with *Sempronia*, * *Psallere, et saltare elegantius quam necesse est probae. Pecunia an famae minus parceret haud facile discerneres*. I cannot therefore but repeat what cannot, I think, fail of some effect on all that hear it attentively.

" Ah! my friends! while we *laugh*, all things
 " are *serious* round about us: GOD is serious, who
 " exerciseth patience towards us; CHRIST is serious,
 " who shed his blood for us; the HOLY GHOST is
 " serious, who striveth against the obstinacy of our

* Sallust.

" hearts ; the Holy Scriptures bring to our ears
 " the most serious things in the world ; the-holy
 " sacraments represent the most serious and awful
 " matters ; the whole creation is serious in serving
 " God, and us ; all that are in Heaven or Hell
 " are serious ; how then, can we be gay ?" To
 give these excellent words their full force, it should
 be known, that they come not from the *priesthood*,
 but the *court* ; and from a courtier as eminent as
England ever boasted.

I shall now proceed to my *second* head, *judging*
 of the *things above* ; which is the second act of our
 duty. As *judging* of them, without *thinking*, which
 some do (or our conversations and presses would
 not be so guilty as they are), is preposterous ; so
thinking of them, without *judging*, is incompetent
 and short. We must therefore *judge* likewise of
 the *things above* ; that is, we must think of them
comparatively, weigh them against all other things
 that may possibly stand in competition with them ;
 and so, on a rational and mature deliberation, give
 them that preference which they so well deserve.

Now this *second* act of the soul is necessary for
 the fixing our affections, for *this* reason ; because
 the simple act of *thinking*, indifferently raises our
 love to every thing that is pleasurable ; but when
judgment comes to examine and discern between
 those pleasurable things, it will find that some of
 them must be forgone and rejected of necessity, be-
 cause they are inconsistent *with* and destructive of
 each other. And this, in a particular manner, is
 the case between *things above*, and *things upon the*

earth; both of them offer pleasures, and such pleasures as must necessarily engage our affections, on our first contemplation of them: but those two kinds of pleasures are inconsistent; so contrary to each other, both in their nature and their means, that it is impossible for *one* soul to pursue both; such therefore, as entertain a distracted inclination for both of them, are called in scripture, men of two souls.

Since then, it is necessary to *chuse* one, in order to enjoy *either*, let our *judgment* examine these two competitors for our affections, *things above*, and *things upon the earth*, and see which of them is most likely to bring in the fullest satisfaction to our souls.

First, let us put this world in the balance; and, to avoid confusion in so wide a subj.^t, let us separately consider the different *orders*, *ages*, *aims*, *relations*, *constitutions*, *tempers*, and *passions* of men; and see this *variety united* in uneasiness and complaint.

First, as to their *orders*. The *peasant* complains aloud; the *courtier* in secret repines: in *want*, what distress? in *affluence*, what satiety? The *great* are under as much difficulty to expend with pleasure, as the *mean* to labour with success. In *retirement*, what solicitation, what heaviness? in the world, what conflict, what fatigue? The *ignorant*, through ill-grounded hope, are disappointed; the *knowing*, through knowledge, despond. Ignorance occasions mistake, mistake disappointment, and disappointment is misery: knowledge, on the other hand, gives true

judgment: and true judgment of things below, gives a demonstration of their insufficiency to our peace. *Good fortune* makes the will undisciplined and dissolute, the imagination vain, the passions strong, and the understanding weak: a miserable state! *affliction* is the best school of wisdom; no volumes are an equivalent for the necessity of reflection *that* lays us under; but then it must be confessed we pay dear for its instruction: and since the end of wisdom is to lead us to pleasure, what signifies that wisdom which is accompanied with pain?

The *marriage state* only *may* be the most happy, but *is* the most dangerous; as fruitful of calamities, as it is of relations; whole capacity of being our greatest pleasures, is likewise their capacity of being our greatest pains. And if we consult experience more than reason in this point, we have grounds to fear the worst. Nor is reason entirely on the other side; for if there are more vices than virtues, more unfortunate than fortunate accidents in life, the balance, in this state, will probably turn against us: the *good* in it we look on as our due, and therefore receive it coldly, and without a proper emotion of heart; the *bad* is unexpected, and therefore keen the resentment of it: the shaft is sharp; the surprize dips it in poison, and doubles our anguish. Both parties look on all that the other can do for them as an absolute *debt*: this notion leaves both a much less power to *oblige*, than to *disgust*; and consequently makes disquiets almost unavoidable.

The *state of celibacy*, unless it can work out an *artificial* happiness from the absence of evils (which requires a peculiar strength of mind), is a desert, melancholy, and disconsolate state: at the maturity of life, tender affections awake in the heart, which demand their proper objects, and pine for the want of them. In this state of celibacy, they must either be extinguished, or continued without gratification: the *first* is a great violence to nature; the *second* her lasting pain; and a pain of that kind, which furnished the *Platonists* with their principal idea of hell. Our paternal *affections* must be drawn off, like a mother's *milk*, or they will corrupt, and turn to disease.

Husband and *father*, are the titles of honour which *nature* dispenses, and endows them with greater pleasure, than any titles which *fortune* can confer. They that resist the impulses of nature, are resisted by her, in their *new* schemes of enjoyment; and nature is a powerful adversary. He that has children *multiplies* himself, and gives happiness many channels by which to flow in upon him: letting the heart stream out in tenderness on its proper objects, as it is the greatest duty, so it is the greatest blessing of life: to have no one, to whom we most heartily wish well, and for whom we are warmly concerned, is a deplorable state. It may be said, that *wisdom* will provide us with such objects, in every condition: it may; but it would cost us less pains, if we suffered *nature* to ease her of that trouble.

Persons of *birth, riches, power, and talents*, those

shining and envied characters, have all their *peculiar* evils, the growth of their respective states.

First, Persons of *birth*: these have their eye on their ancestors, and would have their *glory* subsist on the *merit* of the dead. This the world will not agree to, but thinks that an argument for attainments of their own, which the great by birth look on as their *exemption* from the labour of them: thus are they pained, where they expect *homage* to find *reproach*. They condemn those of mean extraction; and by that contempt, as it were, exact their hate; and generally *have* what they exact, with the bad consequences of it. Ardently they desire honours, because it is natural to men to desire an *accumulation* of that *good*, of which already they enjoy a share: hence a disappointment in *this* pursuit, is more stinging to them than others. Who is *truly* more noble for his high birth? he that despises it; he that despises it as a *possession*, but values it as an *incitement* to virtue. Their *apelations* are their *instructors*: they are styled *noble*, on a presumption that they retain the *virtue*; their blood is styled *generous*, on a presumption that they retain the *high nature* of their ancestors; their *riches* are not sufficient.

2dly. Men of *riches*: these men, which is natural, are so high in opinion of what they largely possess, that they think to have *riches* is to have *every thing*; that they think them the *price* for, and *title* to all the world can give, or man enjoy. Hence high *expectations*, and high *resentments*, and every evil is aggrandized by these. Every wrong

accident is a *calamity*, and not only a calamity, but an *injury* too; for have not they a title to better things? Others, when they are sick, are *sorry*; but these are *angry* also, and look on a *gout*, or a *fever*, as an object of *resentment*; which is still the stranger, because, for the most part, they *invite* them to their habitations.

3dly. Men of *power*: they that have it in their power to make the fortune and reputation of others, *may* have, and often have as many enemies, as those whose fortune and reputation they do *not* make. For men are so fond of themselves, as to think that all others *can* do, they *should* do for them. This is unjust, but this is true. And hence it is, that all the *uneasy*, instead of venting their passion by striking the air, as it is natural for the peevish in their gusts of rage to do, vent it often on men in power, by shooting their arrows at them, *even bitter words*; because men are apt to think they contract an importance, from the importance of those they injure. Whereas it is rare that men in power give just offence to such as these: if they injure, they stoop not to these, they level at the great, for that gives their *dignity* the highest satisfaction. The *great* often *justly* are, the *mean* often *unjustly* will be, their enemies. Where then are their friends? They must be few, and those few are more likely to be secret enemies to them, than to any others with whom they pass for friends. Because, first, Men of power create the greatest *envy*, which is our *strongest passion*: secondly, Their

ruin would afford the largest plunder, and our own emolument is our *chiefest aim*.

4thly. Men of *talents*: if they exert them, it will cost them much pains, and they may probably fail of success, through *malice of accident*, or *indiscretion of choice*. Or if they succeed in their *labour*, their labour may not succeed in its reputation; or if it does, it is only setting themselves a *hard task* for the future; for it is *double shame* to fall beneath themselves. *Fame* is generally these men's aim; and to fail of our aim, be it never so idle, is infelicity. An author at his lamp tells himself in triumph, now the toil is almost over, the purchase at hand, he is within a month of immortality. But on *publication* he finds the payment deferred, deferred to the day of his death; too late a payment of *that* which he cannot transfer to his heir. There is no stronger infatuation than this desire of chimerical immortality. It is very strange; but the secret of it is this: God implanted in the soul a violent desire of *approbation*, in order to stimulate men into an attainment of his own approbation, which is the most valuable; as he implanted in the soul strong *hope*, and *fear*, and *love*, that he himself might be the object of them, as my text directs: but as these *affections*, when they stop short on *temporals*, become *pains*; so this violent desire of *approbation*, when it stops short at men, becomes, though most admirably wise in God's design, that ridiculous and seemingly unaccountable folly of which I speak: and the wisest of men, not attending to this, have sometimes started in surprize and

shame, on discovering that some of their noblest designs had their rise and termination in that most despicable point, the *opinion of men*. Thus you see that the thirst of *approbation*, when misapplied, becomes a *folly*, and incurs *shame*, which it would *most* avoid. And this is the state of the greatest gifts that Omnipotence can bestow, when turned on improper ends. *This*, therefore, which might seem *digressive*, is not so; it tends to demonstrate the miseries of this life; since hence it appears, that we have reason to stand in dread of the very *excellencies* of our nature, as well as the *imperfections* of it.

Secondly, Consider the different *ages*: young men desire *passionately*, and therefore are *afflictively* disappointed. They desire chiefly gratifications of *sense*, and therefore soon impair their appetites for them, and anticipate old age by infirmities.

They are extremely *mutable* in their inclinations; and therefore, as some things by *nature* cannot, others, through their own *temper*, *shall not*, please them long.

They are *fastidious* in their pleasures, as thinking the most delicate and exalted, the prerogative of their time of life: thus they *reject* many, and *impair* the rest.

They are *prone to anger*, because unsubdued by *fortune*, and unapprized by *wisdom* of what they ought to expect: hence are they displeased with others without cause, and then with themselves for being so; for generally their *sense* of being in the wrong is as quick, as their propensity to it is strong.

They have not a sufficient regard for things of

utility (because they never wanted), and find the bad effects of it; what pride can better taste, pleases them more: hence they are very *tender of their honour*, before they have gained any; and *thus* are they pained, not only about things that *are*, but things also that *are not*.

They are *credulous*, because unexperienced; deceived, because credulous; and outrageous, because deceived: and hence from *too fond an opinion*, they are apt to conceive *too inveterate a dislike* for mankind; as fruitful a source of evil, as their *first mistake*.

The young man's field of *reflection* is small, for little is past; his field of *hope* is large, for much is to come; which falling in with vivacity of spirits, and vanity of heart, he indulges it to the exclusion of necessary fear, which is the shield of life; and hence he is perpetually wounded in his *peace, fortune, reputation, or health, or all*.

He delights in *extremes*, whereas *virtue* is in the *mean*, and happiness dwells with her. He is a squanderer of *wealth*, as well as of health, peace, and reputation; and by the *guilt* of youth, lays up *poverty* for age; of which I am now to speak.

Age is infested with *suspicion, excess of caution, disaffection, pusillanimity, illiberality, querulousness, immodesty, garrulity, want of compassion, solid hatred, moroseness, inordinate self-love, extreme covetousness, and distempers*.

An old man is *suspicious*, because experienced. For the *knowledge* and *distrust* of mankind are inseparable. Now he that lives in perpetual *suspi-*

cion, lives the life of a centinel, of a centinel never relieved ; whose business it is to *look out* for and *expect* an enemy, which is an evil not very far short of *perishing by him*.

Allied to suspicion is *excess of caution* : wisdom, coldness of temperature, and sometimes ill-nature, are mixed in this. I shall chuse one instance that includes them all : in points of speculation he rarely affirms or denies any thing positively, though *he* is best able to do it : he knows *nothing*, but is of *such an opinion* on most occasions ; by which, one thing he means, is, to call younger men fools (who delight in a more sanguine stile), and thus, artfully, to gratify his disaffection to them.

He is all *disaffection* : I speak in general. He loves no body ; because formerly, very probably, his good inclinations have been abused ; besides, the affections as naturally contract in the evening of life, as flowers at the departure of the sun. Now he that loves none enjoys none, nor is loved or enjoyed by any.

He is *pusillanimous*, from decay of spirits, and the blows of fortune. Now pusillanimity is the want of *hope*, and hope is the *cordial* of life.

He is *querulous*, which is the voice of pusillanimity, and an infallible source of *contempt*.

He is *illiberal*, as knowing how hard it is to *gain*, and how easy to *lose* ; as likewise, from a growing passion for the security of *to-morrow* ; whereas *to day* is the mistress of youth. Now illiberality is the source of *hatred*, as *generosity* is of love.

He is *immodest*, I mean hardened to the eye, and unaffected with the opinion of others, because he esteems them; and disesteems them, because he knows them; and praise and dispraise we disesteem, when we disesteem those from whom they come. Now this immodesty is a source both of *hatred* and *contempt*. Besides, *virtue* is always enfeebled by a neglect of praise, which is a food of it.

He is *talkative*, because his largest scenes ly backward; and his talk on the *past* is always a censure on the *present*: now he that censures is *displeased*. Besides, *this* talkativeness is disgusting on two accounts: first, as he is generally his own theme; secondly, as it runs counter to the fire and activity of younger men, to whom he speaks.

His *compassion* is *flight*, from his familiarity with misfortunes; and his *hatred* is *solid*, more apt to vent itself in *deeds* than *words*, from the maturity of his wisdom, which loves things *effectual*, and to the purpose. His *former* qualities put him in a state of war with mankind: *this*, in a state of war that gives no quarter.

He is *microse*, and an *inordinate lover of himself*. The *first*, because he envies the pleasures which he cannot partake. There is no such thing, at least in our climate, as a gay old man: a *fy* in *winter* is for nations nearer the sun. He is the *second*, because men rise in fondness for things, in proportion to their hazard of losing them; and his life is on the departure. Hence absurdly his *passion* for it increaseth, as its *value* fails. Now from all that has been said,

His *extreme covetousness* is accounted for. Money has *two* excellent qualities for him: *first*, it will do that for him, which no one thing will willingly do: it will keep him company, as it always does; it will flatter him; it will go on his errands; it will procure him smiles and bows, and all the *outside* of affection and respect. *Secondly*, as it is a thing *inanimate*, it can give no offence. But not to aggravate this matter, (which it little needs!) granting, that as *youth* is the reign of vehement delire, and vehement desire is a disease, a fever, a pain; so *age*, indeed, brings on a serenity; *experience* makes us able pilots in the waves of fortune, and *vigour impaired* no longer scorches us with the violence of desire; granting, that the mind gains that strength which the body loses, and intellectual pleasures are then in their full force; yet so, it must be confessed, are

Distempers too; and what comfort is there in an *hospital*, or a *storm*? In *youth* what disappointments of our own making? in *age* what disappointments from the nature of things? Human life has then its morning and evening; but *the evening and morning are one day*; a day of sorrows! different indeed in sort, but in essence the same. And *this* is the reason why men, always unhappy, are always expecting happiness. For had we no change of scenes to experience one after another, we should sooner be convinced of the vanity of our expectations: whereas we now are amused with hope, which, for pleasure, gives us change of pain; we are *wretched* and *deceived*, which increases our wretchedness; for

every sorrow receives a new sting, from our expectation of the contrary.

Thirdly, consider our *aims*: if we let loose our wishes at things above our desert, how rarely we succeed? or if we succeed, how are we pained with the fears of exposing our insufficiency? How shall we make good the promise our *fortune* has made to the world? We must live in perpetual constraint; be for ever sweating under a mask of form and artifice, which, in spite of all our care, the wise will see through; and at their mercy we ly for the precarious character we preserve. And how ridiculous a sight it is to see a man embarrassed by good fortune, and struggling with his own success? To take up more money than our *estate* can answer, in time, is certain *ruin*: to take up more reputation than our merit can answer, in time, is as certain *shame*.

If our *fortune*, on the other hand, falls below our *desert*, how careless are we of exerting those capacities we are really masters of, and of levying that advantage and reputation which is due to them? Our preferment is our punishment; and the consciousness of our worth is at once our *pride* and our *affliction*: how unpromising a scene is *that* for happiness, where our merit increases the number of our pains?

If our aims are *proportioned* to our *desert*, we may indeed succeed; but our success will soon grow insipid, nay, painful, when we see (as soon we shall!) our inferiors in merit get the start of us in place and fortune; when we find our *wisdom* and

modestly less advantageous, than the *rashness* and *confidence* of other men.

If we stand *alone* and independent, it is a proud, but a solitary and uncomfortable dominion; unrefreshed with hope, which is the life of life itself. If we have our attachments, and lean against our superiors, it is often a shining servitude, a promising anxiety, that excites indeed our spirits, but torments them too, during the *suspence*; and as often deceives as satisfies in the *end*. Which has most happiness? a servile hope, or a hopeless independency? He that has many *hopes*, has many possibilities of *disappointment*: he that has few, has few occasions of *joy*.

If we converse with our *inferiors* or *equals* only, we sacrifice the advancement of our fortune to present ease and complacency: if with our *superiors*, we, in some measure, sacrifice our ease and complacency to our fortune; our caution must be always awake, our abilities always on the stretch; and conversation, which was designed to *recreate*, must become a discipline, and an enterprize.

Moreover, it is *expectation* from superiors, that is apt to give a painful and unreasonable awe of them; an awe due rather to God than man. It is *that* which annoys our breasts with pusillanimous doubts and fears; *that* makes the little heart play its servile passions in all their force, at a smile or a frown; which he that does *not expect*, is free from himself, and in others most justly contemns. The most despicable weakness any one man can be guilty of, is an undue fear of another, which *expectation* is apt to subject him to.

Obscurity has its obvious disadvantages; and a *great name* is the mark of envy and reproach: or it reproach spare it, it must be nurtured or lost. *Time* itself will work decay in glory as in other things, unless it be kept in repair at the expence of returning pains, and a succession of deserts: and if preserved, it has its *moral* evils; fame from *letters* makes a man unsociable and overbearing; fame from political wisdom, designing; and fame from *arms*, incorrect of life. It has likewise its *natural* evils. For since *fame* is the general mistress of mankind, he that enjoys it has almost as many rivals as men, and often as many foes as rivals.

One man aims at making his happiness by *philosophy*, another by *fortune*. The *first* is stemming the stream of the world, and his own nature, with endless labour; the *second* is carried away by that stream with endless hazard, and every wave is master of his peace.

One follows *fancy*; and by that time the thing fancied is attained, his fancy for it is fled. Another follows *custom*, and is fashionably pleased in contradiction to his own heart: seeming to be happy, is his happiness; now *seeming* happiness implies the *want* of it. A third follows *reason*; and reason puts us out of humour with almost every thing about us.

If men have no *pursuits*, they are a burthen to themselves; if they have, disappointments are a greater. What disappointments interrupt the most successful *prosecutions*? And, what is worse, *possession* is the greatest disappointment of all; it destroys

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the very phantom of happiness, our pleasing error, our sweet flatterer hope, which before we enjoyed. The man of success, and of the highest advancement, first indeed laughs at others; but soon he revenges them, by laughing at *himself*. He wonders how he could be so passionately fond of what so little deserved his fondness: he is grieved, he is surprized, he is angry that the absence of those things was able to give him so much pain, the presence of which can afford so little enjoyment. But he usually keeps the secret, in poor hopes of that enjoyment from the mistaken envy of others, which the things envied cannot give him, and takes a malicious pleasure in seeing his unwarned followers deceived as well as himself. There is ever a certain languor attending the fulness of prosperity: when the heart has no more to wish, it yawns over its possession; and the energy of the soul goes out, like a flame that has no more to devour. Who is so wretched as the man that is overwhelmed with a multitude of affairs? He that is relieved from them, and has none at all. But granting superiority of fortune should give some superiority of happiness, let it be remarked, that he who increases the endearments of life, encreases, at the same time, the terrors of death. Which leads me to

The *fourth* consideration, that of our *relations* in life: a wife, a child, dear to us as our own bosoms in which they ly, what cowards do they make us? What are their endearments, their softness, their charms, but new terrors in the frown, and new shafts in the quiver of *misfortune* and *death*?

There is something truly formidable in having such tender blessings as these; and every wise and feeling heart, while it is transported at the thoughts of them, must tremble too.

But all relations are not pained through tenderness of affection. While the father is solicitous for the welfare of his son, how solicitous and impatient is the son (very often) for the death of that very father? What are alliances of blood, but titles for expectation? and what are titles for expectation, but exposures to disappointment, and aggravations of its smart? All that seeming family-endearment, comfort and complacency, which we figure to ourselves at a distance, what is it (too often!) but mutual attacks on the peace, plots on the riches, hopes from the sickness, and joy from the deaths of each other?

The servant envies his master, and sometimes the master his servant, and perhaps with more justice; but, justly neither. For if we well knew how little others enjoy, it would rescue the world from one sin, there would be no such thing as envy upon earth; envy, which is a *double* folly; folly as it is a sin, and folly as it is a mistake; for it results from the supposition of that, which is not the superior happiness of others; which is not, I mean, in that degree we conceive of it; and we *envy* that which we *conceive*.

Fifthly, As to *constitutions* and *tempers*: in health, what temptation? in sickness, what pain? The misery of many is wrapped up in their very veins, how then shall they fly from it? How

many inherit, how many create, how many purchase distempers? Earthquake, storm, war, sweep not half so many, as diseases, which we knowingly contract by carelessness and excess. Women, as they are less subject to pains of mind, are more subject to pains of the body than men, to balance that account.

He that is infirm dies daily, and loses all the pleasure of *life*: he that knows no infirmities, observes not the lapse of time, grows old unawares, and is unprepared for *death*: but suppose a man has health and wisdom too, how many find in their *tempers* an enemy to peace?

The *tempers* are, as I take it, lesser *passions*, or, various fainter *shades* or *blendings* of those strong colours on the soul of man. The gloomy, peevish, sanguine, phlegmatic, good-natured, impatient, improvident, wary, haughty, remitting, courteous, arrogant, suspicious, refining, reserved, affable, fearless, timid, modest, proud, delicate, and insensible temper, have all their peculiar evils.

A gloomy temper surveys every thing in the worst light, and can discover no blessings.

A peevish temper quarrels with the blessings it discovers, with its friends, itself; and defeats the labour of providence for its satisfaction.

The sanguine overshoots; the phlegmatic desponds; the mild tempts insults; the choleric is its own tormentor.

If a man is good natured, his friends devour him; if not, his foes.

The impatient feels as much uneasiness from the

slow approach of pleasure, as others from the despair of it.

To the *thoughtless* and *improvident*, the *surprise* of every disappointment doubles its pain.

To the *wary* and *foreboding*, the constant expectation of calamity, is a calamity itself.

If a man is *haughty*, and too tender of his honour, he gives the power of hurting him to every wretch that can shew disrespect: and who cannot? If he is remiss and negligent of respect, men will withhold *real services*, because their *ceremonial* was not sufficiently welcome: he loses the substance, because he will *not* catch at the shadow. But *forms* are more than shadows, they are the robe and defence of *realities*, which will ever run some hazard when we throw them off.

The *very courteous* lessen their favours by giving them the appearance of a debt, through their frequent professions of kindness: the favours of an *arrogant* man are received unthankfully; because, through too great a consciousness of them, he is his own pay-master. And yet he who does not sometimes assert his own merit, will soon have painful suspicions that the *former* is in the right.

The *suspicious*, in some measure, justify those injuries they *expect*. A person of small merit is anxiously *jealous* of imputations on his honour, because he knows his title is *weak*; one of great merit turbidly *resents* them, because he knows his title is *strong*.

The *refining* temper is expressly a *maker of evils*: not to be obliged by superiors, it construes an inju-

ry; to be obliged by inferiors, an affront. To have its wants relieved, it construes an affectation of superiority in its benefactor; not to have them relieved, a contempt. It can work wonders to its own disadvantage, and make a *look* or *gesture* it disapproves, a *serious* misfortune.

Reserve may procure respect, but it gives a disposition to hatred; because that respect is involuntary, and, as it were, extorted; and we hate every thing that invades the freedom of our choice.

Affability procures good-will, but may give a disposition to contempt; because it gives us cheaply that which we desire, and the difficulty of the attainment enhances the value of things.

A *fearless* temper impairs our caution, and makes us careless of exerting our utmost strength; a *timid*, gives our *understanding* the strongest arguments for exerting our strength, but at the same time enfeebles the heart in the execution of what appears so reasonable.

A *native modesty* in men may conciliate *love* from the *many*, but forbids *esteem* from the *wise*: because with them no act has merit, but what has choice; and these *choose* not modesty by their *reason*, but *suffer* it from their *constitutions*.

Proud men are apt to be injurious, because it is a *mark* of superiority: they strike more through vanity than malice; but then, as it is a *mark*, it is a mutilation of superiority too; for it throws down our respect for them, which is a considerable support of it.

Too *great* a sensibility creates pain, where by

nature it is not ; too *little* perceives not blessings where they are : and there is a too great sensibility from *fortune*, as well as *temper* : *rank* gives some persons such a delicacy, that they have a set of inquietudes entirely their own, the prerogative of their high station, to which their inferiors must not presume to pretend. If *humour* and *passion* are indulged, how domineering are they ? if denied, how rebellious ? Which leads me to

The sixth and last consideration, the *passions* of men.

An account of the *passions* is properly a history of the *active* part of the soul, as an account of the *understanding* is of the *contemplative*. They may be considered as so many *standard bearers*, round each of which many mischiefs are ranged in array against us, and lay waste the tranquillity of human life. They have by others been considered *physically*, as they constitute part of our nature ; *morally*, as they influence virtue and vice ; and *rhetorically*, with regard to composition : but I do not know that they have been considered in a system, or with any accuracy, as the *pains*, and *promoters of the pains* of life. In this view I shall speak of them, with as much light and distinction as I can. It is the passions that give the *perpetual motion* to human life, that roll us from place to place, from object to object, nor will the grave itself afford them rest.

First, *anger*. It is elegantly said, the *king's anger is as a roaring lion*. Which description of it is confined to kings, only as to its efficacy ; it is as

strong, though not as *successful* in other men. By a king it is let loose into the large field of power; in others it bites the bars that confine it, and, in both, it lashes itself. This shows it to be a *pain*; and it likewise proceeds from pain; for no one is angry, but who has, or fancies he has received an injury in himself, or *his*; for which he is, first, grieved. So that anger may be called the daughter of *sorrow*, and the mother of *revenge*, which often has fatal consequences. Thus this passion has *past*, *present*, and *future* pains belonging to it.

Anger is frequent; for among enemies it is the *natural* habit of the mind; and where are not enemies? Among friends it is *unnatural*, and therefore, when it happens, more tormenting.

As pride is *predominant* in man, the principal cause of anger is disrespect; the question therefore is, if the angry man acts not against his own supreme purpose: if anger is *impotent*, that is a blow directly on his *pride*: if it succeeds by unworthy means, that is a blow on his general character. Anger therefore is not only an evil itself, proceeding *from*, and leading *to* evil, but, often, to the very evil it would most avoid. It falls on its own sword.

Two sorts of men are most subject to this passion; men of *felicity*, and men of *affliction*. One because their *expectations* are high, the other because their *uneasinesses* are many. The *first* make their superiority their anxiety, counterbalancing by their own resentment the *favours* of nature and

fortune ; the *second* inflame the *severities* of them both.

Allied to anger is *hatred*, which is a lasting anger ; now hatred is always accompanied with disgust, and disgust is pain.

Allied to hatred are *contempt* and *abhorrence* ; contempt is hatred without fear, but it is *hatred*, and therefore pain. *Abhorrence* is hatred with fear, and therefore its pain is double.

Investive indeed eases the heart, as a discharge the stomach, but it also proves it very sick before.

I do not deny that there is such a thing as a malicious *pleasure* ; but I affirm it is a pleasure like that of violent scratching, or striking ourselves in some dispositions ; it supposes a distemper, and leaves a wound, both in our reputation and our peace.

Anger has under its banner *investive*, *assault*, *ruin*, and *death*.

Secondly, *Love*. By love I mean not the desire of what is *useful* or *honest*, but more particularly of what is *pleasant*. With *philosophers* it includes the *two former*, with the *world* it is often limited to the *last*. It implies discontent, that is *pain* ; for he that desires, is dissatisfied with his present condition, be it what it will. And the pain is in proportion to the desire

To say the least to the disadvantage of this passion. It is putting your peace in the power of *another*, which is rarely safe even in your own.

There are *two* things, I think, *peculiar* to this passion ; and what makes them more remarkable,

is, they seem somewhat inconsistent. *One* is our desire of it; the *other* is a condition that makes it very *undesirable*. As to the first, we don't seek, nay, we avoid occasions of *anger*, *hatred*, *fear*, *shame*, or *envy*, but we seek occasions of *love*. As to the second, love is *all* the passions in *one*: it is *anger* that it *cannot*, *shame* that it *does not*, *fear* that it *shall not* enjoy its object; it is *envy* of, and *hatred* to, those that possibly may. For *envy*, *hatred*, and *suspicion*, form love's constant companion, *jealousy*; which therefore stings deeper than *either* of them, because it is *all*. Now as many passions as love has, so many pains. Be it therefore a maxim, He that was never *pained*, never *loved*.

But though this passion has pains, leads it not to *pleasures*? It *may* fail of them, and then it is *despair*, which is most terrible; if it attains them, they may not be lasting; for most pleasures, like flowers when gathered, die.

Love has under its banner *watching*, *sickness*, *abasement*, *adulation*, *perjury*, *jealousy*; and sometimes it lifts *anger's* most dreadful followers; the only difference is, *there*, they are standing troops, *here*, casual recruits; *there*, they are *volunteers*, *here*, they are *pressed* occasionally into the service; for they do not *naturally* belong to love.

Thirdly, *Fear*. This is a most dismal passion; a mind haunted with fear is a hideous night-piece of storm, precipice, ruins, tombs, and apparitions; it is not content with the compass of nature, as if too scanty for evil, but creates new worlds for ca-

lacity, things that are *not*. But *very* timorous natures only suffer to this degree; and it is well they do not; for *such a fear* alone is capable of taking an ample vengeance of an incensed God. Insomuch that some have thought that hell consisted in the severe extremity of this passion only.

All that *fear*, have proportionable *pain*. It is an anticipation of evil; and has under its banner, *confusion, supplication, servility, amazement, and self-desertion* particularly.

For I think it a *peculiarity* of *fear*, that it defeats its own purpose more than any of the passions. *Anger* strikes, and if unsuccessfully, it only loses a blow; *love* pursues, and, if unsuccessfully, it only loses a pursuit; *fear* makes us fly, but makes us stumble too, and the more precipitate our flight, the farther are we from an escape. Hence says the holy scripture, *It betrays the succours of reason*, meaning, that it betrays it more than any other passion, for all betray it in some degree.

Fears are the *shields* of life; but if they are too many, they are an oppression, and like the maid at the *Capitol*, we perish under them.

Fears we have many, but there is *but one* that came from heaven (as the *Romans* fabled of their *Ancile*), which is the fear of God; *all the rest are false*; and this sevenfold shield will save us from them: a falling world cannot affright him, whom that shield has under its protection.

4thly. There is also *false shame*; when, thro' an affectation of the esteem of bad men, we are ashamed of what God approves; or if ashamed of

what is truly shameful, when we are ashamed with regard to men, not GOD. The *first* is blasphemy in thought; or such a thought, as if expressed in words, would be blasphemous. The *second* is sacrilege, giving GOD's due to man. This is a shame to be ashamed of; and *contrary* to the Apostle's *repentance not to be repented of*, for shame is a repentance, or something very like it.

Shame is a sense of estimation impaired, and of our sinking in the opinion of *men*; I wish I could add of *GOD* too; for men are not ashamed of *injustice* or *profaneness*, at the same time that they blush for an omission in *fashion* or *complaisance*: nay, I wish they are not often *proud* of the *former*; now pride is *shame's* reverse. As shining in the opinion of others is the supreme aim of almost all men, *shame* must be exceeding *painful*, as it implies the loss or diminution of their greatest *fancied* good.

Shame has under its banner, *self-condemnation*, *pusillanimity*, *regret*, *lying*, *confusion of face*.

Which last puts me in mind of what I take to be *peculiarities* of this passion. Which are three. First, Other passions fly to men for redress of their grievances, this flies from them: *anger* flies to strike, *love* to embrace, *fear* for shelter; but shame flies from all men, and makes an eye as sharp as a sword. Shame's bad estate is seen in this, that its hope and felicity runs so low, as to make *night* and *oblivion*, which are the terror of others, a wish, a joy; *fallere et effugere est triumphus*.

Secondly, *Shame* has a more infallible mark fix-

ed on it by nature, than any of the rest, I mean blushes. Of which I take the reason to be, that this passion *necessarily* supposes *guilt*. Which is not the case of any of the passions beside, except envy, which is generally marked with *paleness*, as shame with the contrary. Shame, I say, necessarily supposes guilt. For none are ashamed but on one of these three accounts. First, Because they are directly guilty. Secondly, Because they want some merit they ought to have. Thirdly, Because they suffer some indignity. Now the want of proper merit proceeds generally from *omissions*; suffering indignities, from *sloth* or *cowardice*; and all these are *vicious*. But men are sometimes ashamed of *virtue*. True; but then they consider that virtue as a fault, in the eyes of those before whom they are ashamed of it: besides, then, it does not only *suppose*, but *is* guilt.

Thirdly, *Lying*. This is the false cover of *false* shame: for true or proper shame has regard to God: and who *dares*, who *can* lye to him? For we cannot lye to any purpose, but to fallible beings. Now as *false* shame is lying eternally, tho' the person subject to it is ashamed without reason *at first*, he is sure to have ample reason for shame *in the end*; and consequently he will be *pained* without just cause, and with it too.

5thly. *Envy*. This is the most *deformed* and most *detestable* of all the passions. A good man may be *angry*, or *ashamed*, may *love*, or *fear*; but a good man cannot *envy*. For all other passions seek *good*, but *envy* *evil*. All other passions

propose *advantages* to themselves; envy seeks the *detriment* of others. *They* therefore are *human*. *This* is *diabolical*. *Anger* seeks vengeance for an injury; an injury in fortune, or person, or honour; but envy pretends no injuries, and yet has an appetite for vengeance: *love* seeks the possession of *good*, *fear* the flight of *evil*, but envy neither; all her good is the disadvantage of another. Hence it is most detestable; and because most detestable, therefore, Secondly,

Most *deformed*. For it is the most *detestable*, because the least *natural*; or what is least natural works in us the most disadvantageous and deforming effects. We must be sometimes *angry*, we must *love*, and *fear*, and be *ashamed*, by the necessity of our nature, and there are just occasions for them all. But no necessity of our nature obliges us to *envy*, nor is there any just occasion for it. For all men are unhappy, only we know not where their uneasiness lyes; therefore there is no *natural* occasion for envy; and that there should be a *moral* one, is a contradiction; for the happier others are, the more we should *rejoice*. As therefore neither our *nature* nor *reason* requires envy, it is properly *unnatural*, and because unnatural, it works such terrible effects in us. How pale, keen, inhuman, and emaciated is its look, if the undeserved indulgence of constitution gets not the better of those effects? Now all these are demonstrations of its extreme *pain*.

Men of imagination therefore have been fond of this subject, as painters, poets, historians; for the

imagination delights in *extremes*; and nothing is more terrible than their descriptions of it, but the thing itself. *A cheerful heart does good like a medicine*, but envy corrodes like a poison; it is so sharp, that it cuts the body which sheathes it. Nay, it is thought by some, actually to send forth its virulence; to sit visible in the eyes, and wound its object. Of this opinion seems our greatest *English* philosopher, who assigns physical reasons why persons in *joy*, and *triumph*, are more liable to receive this venom than others. What a wretch must the quiver of such arrows be? such is the *pain* of envy, that it made the two greatest and bravest men that ever lived weep; it made them shed tears, but not of compassion, though over the monuments of the dead.

Compassion is grieved at others evil, *envy* at others good. *Indignation* is grieved that the unworthy prosper, *envy* that the meritorious prosper also. *Emulation* is grieved at its own wants, *envy* at the enjoyments of others. Nay, it principally maligns those who deserve the greatest praise (*viz.*) *new men*, the makers of their own fame and fortune. For rising glory occasions the greatest envy, as kindling fire the greatest smoke. In a word, it is the reverse of *charity*; and as that is the supreme source of *pleasure*, so this of *pain*. This gathers pain, as that gathers pleasures, from all the felicities that happen to mankind. Nor is it only *painful*, but *ignominious*. The most imperfect and pusillanimous are most subject to it; the *first*, because their field for envy is largest; the *second*, because,

through mistake, what is little *appears* great to *them*; end, therefore, as the proper object of envy.

Its *peculiarities* ~~make~~ *seem* to be, first, that it seeks not (as the other passions) good, but evil. Secondly, that this is *lasting*, the others *short*. We are angry or ashamed, we love or fear, for a day or a year; but we envy for *life*; and I look on it to be the most universal source of unhappiness on earth.

It has under its banner, *hatred, calumny, treachery, cabal, with the meagerness of famine, venom of pestilence, and rage of war.*

Nor are the *good* and *pleasurable* passions without their inconveniencies and inquietudes, which is a subject *hitherto*, I believe, unhandled. *Compassion, indignation, emulation, hope, nay, and joy* itself, if fairly examined, would prove this true, without any refinement, or affectation of *novelty* in the attempt.

First, *compassion*, while it has others misery in its eye, it has its own in its *apprehension*; and is struck with a quick sense of the *obnoxious* condition of human nature. Hence it is evident, that *fear* and *sorrow* are included in it; and can there be *fear* and *sorrow* without pain?

Though I know it is disputed; I venture to affirm, that our *compassion* for others is accompanied with a concern for ourselves. And I am persuaded of this, from considering the persons who are *most*, and who are *least* inclined to *compassion*.

The *least* inclined, are the *most* confirmed in, or the *most* lost to happiness. The *first* are not compassionate, because most *secure*; the *second*, be-

cause they have *felt the worst*. Little *self-concern* being moved by the miserable object in these men, little *compassion* is moved by it too.

The *most inclined* to it are the *timid*, and *those who have wives, children, and relations*. The *first*, because they are most liable to fear for themselves; the *second*, because they afford misfortune the largest mark.

And all are more compassionate toward their equals in age, fortune, birth, qualifications, or manners, than others; because the misfortunes of *such* are a more direct alarm of fear for *themselves*.

Secondly, Indignation. This is a just and noble passion, and none but the noble-minded feel it. It is a generous zeal for right, an heroic and laudable anger at the prosperity of undeservers. An anger therefore foreign to the unworthy, base, and profligate, who can conceive no repentment that men, like themselves, prosper. This elevated passion has sometimes a severer pang than is consistent with life. *Cato* died of it. He thought no man worthy to triumph over liberty and *Rome*. And that violent deportment shewn at his *death*, which has *hitherto* been wrongfully imputed to a ferocity of *temper*, was, I think, owing to this accidental *passion*, which was the *cause of his death*; this fever, this noble inflammation of mind, this indignation for *Caesar's unjust success*. My conjecture clears his character in *that respect*, and makes it more consistent with that humanity, which he, in a peculiar manner, manifested on many occasions in his

laudable life, which was worthy our emulation, though his death was blameable at the best.

Thirdly, Emulation is an exalted and glorious passion, parent of most excellencies in human life. It is enamoured of all virtue and accomplishment; its generous *food* is praise; its sublime *profession*, transcendency; and the *life* it pants after, immortality. It kindles all that is illustrious; and, as it were, lights its torch at the sun. *Envy* seeks others evil, *emulation* its own good: *envy* repines at excellence *without* imitation; *emulation* imitates, and rejoices in it. We *envy* often what we *cannot* arrive at, we *emulate* nothing but what we *can*, or think at least *we can* attain. Hence the *young* and *magnanimous* are most inflamed with emulation, and emulation rather of glory and virtue, than of the goods of the *body* or *fortune*, till the world effaces nature's first good impressions. *Haec imitami, says Tully, per Deos immortales, haec ampla sunt, haec divina, haec immortalia, haec fama celebrantur, monumentis annalium mandantur, posteritate propagantur.*

But though emulation is the pursuit of the most amiable things, and that by persons most amiable too, it cannot escape; it cannot escape in a bad world, where men judge of others by themselves; being mistaken for *envy*, and being treated accordingly. For it has, sometimes, such a degree of resemblance, as to give the *weak* occasion of error, and the *malicious* of excuse. Thus it falls *alieno vulnere*; not to mention its own natural *pain*, which is at least as uneasy to the soul, as extreme

thirst is to the *body*. *Hope* and *fear* play the heart of *emulation* with violence; it has its throbs, its paleness, and tremblings, when carried to an height.

—————*Exultantiaque haurit*

Corda pavor pulsans, laudumque arrelia cupido.

4thly. Hope, and joy. *Hope* feels the stings of impatience, which is often so vehemently eager, that falling from it into the *despair* of its object, is sometimes a sensible ease to the mind. *Joy*, if moderate, scarce breaks through the general disquiet of life; if immoderate, it is a fever, a tumult, a gay delirium, a *transport*; which signifies a man's being beside or beyond himself; and he that is not in possession of himself, can but ill be said to be in possession of any thing else: joy in this case goes beyond its bounds, into an enemy's country, and becomes a *pain*; as its tears abundantly testify. Nor has it tears only, but it is sometimes *mortal*.

Hence some, nay most philosophers, have placed our *chief good* in serenity or indolence; but this is a mistake. Indolence or rest, is inconsistent with our nature, and not to be found in heaven itself, but in a *comparative* sense. On the contrary, our heaven will consist in a pleasing motion, a delightful exertion, a transporting progress to all eternity. *Innihilation* is the only *rest* for man. What therefore we are to aim at, I shall shew in my *second* discourse.

To conclude on the *passions*. We consist of soul and body; the passions are the wants of the soul, as the appetites may be called the passions of

the body. So that we are made up of *wants*, that is of *pains*. Who is almost ever free from one passion or another? And as passions are the pains (from which they take their very name), so are they the destroyers too, of our nature. They *pain* the whole soul, they *confound* the memory, *make wild* the imagination, and *hurt* the understanding, like ebriety, which they resemble in their natural and moral ill consequences. And because they injure the body also, therefore has the *physician*, as well as *moralist*, to do with them; and interdicts them to all those who desire length of days. Nay, they are more terrible than that death which they hasten; for many have fled to *that* from the torment of them. It seems *strangest*, at first sight, that *fear*, of all the passions, should put on this appearance of courage; but it is so far from it, in reality, that no *other passion* ever arrived at suicide, but through the suggestion of this trembler, *fear*. Men die because they *fear* life under its present ills; whereas *true valour* meets those ills, whatever they are, with the same resolution with which *they* meet death.

If this account of the passions be just, let us turn them against themselves; let us be angry with *anger*, ashamed of *shame*, afraid of *fear*, pity *envy*, and moderate our fondness for *love*. For some are so idle, ridiculous, shameless, as to court the passion itself; and at a time too, when they have the least probability of success. *Love*, according to the different objects it embraces, like a *woman espoused*, changes its name, and becomes *voluptu*;

ousness, ambition, avarice, or vanity: those four predominant impulses that divide mankind between them; that beat on us, like the four winds of heaven, and keep the restless world in a perpetual storm.

On this common subject I shall endeavour to throw some new light, by shewing that they all act directly counter to their own purposes, and are the *reverse* of that which they pretend to.

First, the *voluptuous*: can this man be *unhappy*, whose sole aim is *pleasure*? whose *study* is the *art*, whose life is the *chace*, of *delight*? He may, he is, nay, he *must* be so; because his *imagination* promises much more than *sense* is able to pay. Hence, he is always *disappointed*; but, through ignorance or negligence of the cause of it, though always *disappointed*, he is always *expecting*; and repeated experience serves only to *upbraid*, not *correct* his conduct. And it *must* be so; for as every new scene of voluptuousness is a new *light* to his understanding, to shew the insufficiency of *those scenes* to his happiness; so is it, also, a new *blow* to his understanding, and the rectitude of his will, and weakens his power of resisting *them*. Hence is he reduced to the wretched estate of eternally *pur-suing* and eternally *condemning* the same things; than which, nothing more severe could be imposed by the greatest tyrant, and greatest foe. 'Tis not in vigorous health, boundless fortune, unrestrained liberty, or that liberty improved by skill and experience into an *art of debauchery*, to give him satisfaction, nay, *not* to give him inquietude, tho'

virtue, though *reason* did not interpose: the *body* only would find out the vanity, the tedium, the bad effect of voluptuousness; and bare *instinct* would reproach him with it. His *past* gives regret, his *present* dissatisfies, and his *future* deceives: his *imagination* imposes on his *senses*; his *senses* weaken and vex his *understanding*; and his *understanding* censures them both: they persist, that grows peevish and impotent. Thus the divided man, like a divided family, is the seat of misery, and object of contempt.

With regard to the chief branch of sensuality, and its fatal consequences, it may be truly said, that nothing is more stinging than a bad woman's *hatred*, except her *caresses*; nothing is more to be declined than her *deformity*, except her *charms*. But as for a good woman, *her price is beyond gold*. *She is a pillar of rest*.

The *man of pleasure*, as the phrase is, is the most ridiculous of all beings: he travels, indeed, with his ribbon, plume, and bells; his *dress*, and his *music*; but through a toilsome and beaten road; and every day nauseously repeats the same tract. Throw an eye into the gay world; what see we, for the most part, but a set of querulous, emaciated, fluttering, phantastical beings, worn out in the keen pursuit of pleasure; creatures that *know, own, condemn, deplore*, yet still *pursue* their own infelicity? The decayed *monuments* of error! the thin *remains* of what is called delight!

In a word, to suppose *sense alone* can make a man happy, is to suppose *reason* superfluous, which is

blasphemous and absurd: but sensuality brings such a grossness on the understanding, that this argument will not be so much as *comprehended* by those who have the greatest need of being *affected* by it. Now, the cause of their not comprehending it, is their total inexperience and ignorance of the pleasures of *reason*: which ignorance proves this gay, this gallant creature, this *patron* of pleasures, and *professor* of delight (what he little suspects), in reality, the greatell *niggard* in enjoyment, the greatest *self-denier* in the world.

Secondly, *Ambition*. Voluptuousness has its intervals: when *sense* is satisfied, it pauses for the revival of its flame; like *eruptions*, it rages and rests by turns: but ambition, like a *conflagration*, burns on incessant; the more it has, the more it craves; the more it devours, the stronger is its fury. *Success* but sets it new tasks, and is as severe to the ambitious as *misfortune* to other men. Every difficulty he cuts off, seven rise in its stead: so that the *charatier* of the most ambitious man that ever lived, is a proper *motto* for all his sons, whose sport, like the *leviathan's*, makes a tempest, and is the ruin of all about them. *Nill actum reputans, dum quid superesset agendum* That is 'it is their maxim, to know no rest. How differs then *ambition* from *slavery*? As severe *exercise* from hard *labour*; the thing is the same, only *here* it is necessity, and *there* it is choice; that is, *there*, it is *wretchedness*, and *folly* too.

The *ambitious* thinks all happiness is derived from *comparison*, and that highest and happiest is the

same thing: nor knows that to be *high*, is not always to be *happy*; but to be *happy*, is always, and truly to be *high*. If his notion is right, how have the wisest of all ages and all nations been mistaken? Either they have persevered in an eternal and obstinate error, in asserting *content* to be happiness, or he is not happy at all; for ambition imports an absence, nay, a disdain of *content*: and indeed it has the glory, if it is a glory, of being far from it. Disappointment in small things, gives the ambitious no small anxiety; success in great, no great satisfaction, because there remain still greater things than these; and while his heart burns at some mighty point in view it robs him of the relish of those considerable enjoyments which nature indulges to the meanest of her children. The violence of the ambitious man's desires sets him at a distance from himself; he is never at home to the present hour, but reaching and grasping at joys to come; all in possession is contemptible. To what amounts then his violent affection for those objects he pursues? To a strenuous endeavour, by making them his *own*, to render them *contemptible* as fast as he can; that is, he seeks at once to *gain* a blessing, and to *destroy* it: nor in this only does the ambitious appear to thwart his own purposes, as will appear immediately.

But, first, let us observe that he cannot be extremely happy in the *very exercise* of his dominion, that fullest gust of all his desires; when he stands surrounded with many circles of expecting, anxious beings; the whole nest gaping wide, while he can

allay the cravings but of few. He has not morsels for them all. If he has any humanity, it must touch it, to see himself besieged with eager visages, secret pains, repining hearts, disappointed hopes, that will strike deep into the peace of families, and carry distress beyond his *knowledge*, and *perhaps* beyond his *conception* of it. Or if these stings of his fellow-creatures touch him not, he is still more to be pitied.

Seek not of the Lord preheminance, neither of the king in the seat of honour. But call in the waves of thy desire, climbing over one another for ever; bid thy proud heart be still, and say to it, hitherto shalt thou go, and no farther: and let it, at least, have the bounds of the ocean, as well as the *tumult* of it.

What does the ambitious man aim at? At dominion, principality, and power; at governing nations, and making his name great in the earth. And who but the pusillanimous and base shall censure him for *this*? Whatever his errors are, does he not shew, at least, a *grandeur of deportment*, and a *magnanimity of heart*? Neither, but altogether the reverse.

For, *first*, as to *magnanimity*. There is a meanness of spirit in passionately desiring those things, the *contempt* of which requires a greater effort of mind (that is, a greater magnanimity), and bestows a fuller happiness, than the *possession* of them. *Magnanimity* is a resolution able to comply with the dictates of reason when most difficult; if therefore ambition is unreasonable (as I have shewn), it must be pusillanimous; I will not therefore call the

ambitious an *unhappy* or a *guilty* (as I might), but what will touch him nearer, I will call him a *little* man; and if that does not touch him nearer, it will be a new argument to prove that I call him *so* with the greatest truth.

As to the second, *the grandeur of his deportment*; that is, his distance from subjection and servility. What then if it should appear that no man is so much a slave? Dominion over others is indeed his aim; but by that very aim he most effectually subjects himself to them. Every one, that can retard or promote his purposes, has an awe over him; is the object of his anxious application, and servile fear; disciplines his deportment, and pains his mind. *Not to expect* is the only means to be free, and he is all expectation, that is, all slavery; *while dominion*, nay, *because* dominion is his only aim. And thus it fares with all irregular pursuits of happiness; they contradict the purpose of GOD, and therefore must counter-act themselves; for GOD will not be controuled. He has assigned *other* means of happiness; and to convince us of it most strongly, they that make not use of *his* means, but their *own*, to that end, shall not only fail of it, but their endeavours shall be their hindrance, shall work them backwards, and set them at a greater distance from it. Thus the *voluptuary* just mentioned, while he too warmly pursues the *objects*, most effectually blunts the *powers* of appetite. The *covetous*, while he inordinately desires to become rich, though he succeeds in all his attempts, he fails of his end; nay, fails of it *by* that success; GOD,

to chastise, and, as it were, to insult him too, gives him the *thing*, but with-holds the enjoyment; nay, commands *abundance* to make him *poor*. Thus, and thus only, can that miraculous conduct of the covetous be accounted for; of whom,

Thirdly, I am about to speak. The covetous strongly exposes human nature, by shewing us an instance in *one* person how much she *desires*, and how little she *wants*. For who subsists on so little? who grasps at so much? He mistakes the *means* for the *end*; *money* for *enjoyment*; nay, the means in his hands, makes against his *end*, and the power of *enjoying* is an *inducement* to *self-denial*. The gold that comes into his possession but *changes* its *mine*, and is further from the light than ever. His *impiety* and his *folly* are equally gross. As to the *first*, he is often in scripture called an idolater, because he worships his wealth: as to the *second*, that his idol, like other idols of old, requires severer service of him than the *true* GOD; more rigid austerities than religion enjoins: his toils, his self-denials, his fervent devotion to *gain*, is greater than that which might carry him to *heaven*. Covetousness is nothing but the painful *art* of making industry sinful, wealth indigent, life sordid, death terrible, and heirs ungrateful, without any manner of guilt.

But to set it in the clearest and shortest light; what is wealth? a *security* put into our hands, that the enjoyments of this world shall be delivered to us whenever we please, on *that* title. Now if that title rather denies than gives us those enjoyments, it loses its nature; it is no longer a

title indulged to our necessities, but it is a *warrant* served on our folly, to deliver us over to wretchedness, to shame, and to want. So that the richest miser has no *wealth*.

Nothing is so strange as man's inextinguishable thirst for *more*: nay, he pants after that which he *has*. For I affirm, that infinite numbers have *sufficient* means of happiness already in their hands, and *sufficient* means is what they are reaching after; for who needs more? But men *know not* what they possess. How few have made an inventory of their own blessings? how few know what they do *not* want? Hence, *Know thyself* was said to come from heaven: for, without it, no man can be content. Our pains are from our *desires*, not from our *wants*. For which most material truth, I shall mention two arguments.

First, If we examine, we shall often find, that, after burning with some vehement desire, we are quieted by *despair*, as *much*, and perhaps, *more happily*, than we should have been by *success*.

Second, Let some great pain seize us in our most rapid pursuit after what we imagine essential to our peace, and the ceasing of that *superior pain* will give us a *momentary* conviction, that we were *really*, then, happy, when we *thought* ourselves miserable. But folly soon reclaims us as her own.

If we could lay aside but two things; first, our *own imagination*, which makes us think things necessary which are not; secondly, our deference for the *opinion of the world*, which makes us incapable of being happy, unless we are *thought* so; the ma-

jority of mankind would be much happier than they, at present, imagine; they would grow rich *extempore*, and be more indebted to the removal of an error in judgment, than to any *possible* success they could have in their pursuits of wealth. Our error in the present case (as in most others) proceeds from *partial views*, from not taking in the *whole*. We look only on those *above us*, which strains our hearts in pursuit, and puts all our faculties painfully on the stretch: whereas if we looked on those *below us* too, it would abate our ferment, remit our painful intention, and inspire quite *new* sentiments of our own state. Now on our sentiments (which few observe) our happiness depends. It lies in thoughts, and not in things. Things are *opaque* bodies, which have no light of their own, and are only capable of reflecting to advantage the gaiety beaming on them from our own hearts. Hence, the very unhappy fly public and pompous scenes of life; because, while gay to *others*, they are dark to *them*, and, therefore, more provokingly so than *retreat*. It is not the man's business, who desires happiness, to encrease his *riches*, but to give his *understanding* so just a judgment of things, and his *affections* so rational a temper, as to know that he could not be more happy, though he *were* more rich. Nay, some have parted with their riches for the sake of happiness. But, *in this*, the faith of annals, in the miser's opinion, will labour very much.

The foundation of error in this point, is, all our pains and pleasures are from *sense* or *imagination*,

and not from *reason*. Now content is an *art*; I have *learned* to be content, says the Apostle. Neither nature, nor chance, nor circumstances can give it. The whole body of Pagan and Christian ethics are the rules of this art. Now the miser professes an art directly the reverse of it. *He is wise* (which is another word for *happy* in this case), who can say, I have not much, but no man has more, for I have all I want. *Socrates* said with wit, but with judgment too, "He that needs *least*, is most like "the Gods, who need *nothing*."

4thly. I am to speak of the *vain*. This is the most distinguished son of folly, and has the most airy happiness of them all. His brothers before-mentioned, though themselves to be laughed at, laugh at him. He seeks his felicity entirely in the opinions of *others*, and but rarely finds it there; for the world, by his very name, has pronounced against him; from the emptiness of his pursuit, and the thinness of his enjoyment, is he called *vain*. The former *wish* at least for something substantial, but his very *wish* is a *reproach*.

As the too modest is pained by being *in* the public eye, he is pained by being *out* of it. What a vast expence is he at to buy spectators? for to what other end is his splendid person and equipage, his large parks, palaces, rivers, and cascades? how expensive? and how useless? *Sense* is too narrow, it wants compass to take them in; less things would gratify *that* more. The *understanding* condemns them; childish *imagination* only approves, and that too but for a moment: what are these

pageantries, but *larger toys* with which it plays a while, and then grows weary of them? what are they, but huge monuments of mistake, subjects for popular talk, and an immense tax paid for *rumour*, for sure it cannot be called *fame*?

How he gazes on, and touches, and re-touches, and, as it were, solicits his shining ornaments to give him some extraordinary sensation, somewhat adequate to the desire he indulged for, or the expectation he entertained *from* them! but in vain. They were much more powerful in *idea*, than they are in *fact*. It is falling in love with our own mistaken ideas that makes fools and beggars of half mankind.

The *vain* is a beggar of admiration. Begging is an unrespectable profession; but as we are dependent beings, we must all be beggars in some degree. The scandal therefore of this practice depends on two things, the character of the person *from whom*, and the value of the things *which* we beg. Now, the vain begs from all, even the *most ignoble*; and he begs *nothing*; I mean, what turns to no account. He is more noble that asks *bread*, than he who asks a bow, or the glance of an eye; for *that* is more worth.

In what does this man lay out the faculties of an immortal soul? that time, on which depends eternity? that estate, which, well disposed of, might, in some measure, purchase heaven? What is his tedious labour, subtle machination, ardent desire, and reigning ambition? — *to be seen*. This ridiculous, but *true* answer, renders all grave censure almost

superfluous. If the world was filled with such as these, all arts, and engines of discipline, and of death, for chastisement of offence, might seem needless; let the law they violate, or the power they offend, but condemn them to *retreat*.

But to come close to the point. What is it the *vain* would have? He would be admired; he begs an *alms* of admiration from every passer-by, and his happiness *starves* without it. Now, what does this desire imply? It implies that he cannot be happy without their leave. Thus is he by *choice* the most precarious creature on earth. The most precarious is the most wretched, and, therefore, the most precarious by *choice*, is the most foolish too; if any will deny that the most precarious being is most wretched, let them consider that the reverse, the least precarious being, is the most happy, for that is God: and the farther we are removed from independency and self-sufficiency, the farther are we removed from that standard of wisdom and happiness.

I shall dismiss the *vain* with one observation more. We ought *particularly* to guard against this folly, for a reason very *particular* too. Other vices are promoted by vices; but this is often nourished by *virtue* itself.

Thus have I, I think, proved, that the *voluptuous* is the greatest *self-denier*; that the *ambitious* is the greatest *slave*; that the *covetous* has no wealth; and that the *vain*, whose idol is *admiration*, is the greatest object of *contempt*.

The considerations, which have been alledged

to the discredit of human happiness, have been *hitherto* drawn from general topics; *one* remains, that is *too peculiar*. We have lately lost our king; that sad occasion first suggested *this subject* to me, which now it supports with an unwelcome argument; for when our sovereign fell, nature herself emphatically proclaimed, "That all below is vain." Too powerful a supplement to this discourse!

Who then art thou, who settest thine affections on things below? Art thou greater than the deceased? Dost thou value thyself on thy *birth*? The most highly descended is no more. Dost thou value thyself on thy *riches*? The king of *Britain* is no more. Dost thou value thyself on thy *power*? The master of the seas, the arbiter of *Europe*, is no more. Dost thou glory in thy constancy, humanity, affection to thy friend, or *encouragement of arts*?—But I forbear. It is *ambition* to be *grateful*, when princes bestow.

How lately were the eyes of all *Europe* thrown on this great man? For *man* let me call him, now, nor contradict the declaration which his mortality has made. They that find him, now, must *seek* for him; and seek for him in the *dust*. What on earth but must tell us this world is vain, if thrones declare it? if kings, if *British* kings, are demonstrations of it?

I shall offer one observation on the death of princes, which is full to my present purpose. A throne is the shining period, the golden termination of the worldly man's prospect; *his* passions affect, *his* understanding conceives nothing beyond

it, or the favours it can bestow. The sun, the expanse of heaven, or what lyes higher, have no lustre in *his* sight, no room in his pre-engaged imagination; it is all a superfluous waste. When therefore his monarch dies, he is left in darkness, *his* sun is set, it is the night of ambition with him: which naturally damps him into reflection, and fills that reflection with awful thoughts.

With reverence then be it spoken, what can GOD, in his ordinary means, do more, to turn his affections into their right channel, and send them forward to their proper end? Providence, by his king's decease, takes away the very ground on which his delusion rose; it sinks before him; his *error* is supplanted, nor has his *folly* whereon to stand; but must return, like the dove in the deluge, to his own bosom again.

By *this* is he convinced, that his ultimate point of view is not only vain in its nature, but vain in fact; it not only *may*, but *has* actually failed. What then is he under a necessity of doing, this boundary of his sight removed? Either he must look forward (and what is beyond it but GOD?) or, he must close his eyes in wilful darkness, and still repose his trust in things which he has *experienced* to be vain. Such accidents, therefore, however fatal to his *secular*, are the mercy of GOD as to his *eternal* interest, and say with my text, *Set your affections on things above, and not on things on the earth.*

Let us now, from the throne, look back, (as from an eminence), on the former part of our journey: we have passed the several orders, ages, aims,

relations, constitutions, tempers, passions, with the four great *impulses* of mankind, and have found but one report through the several stages of our course; the various witnesses concur, and bring in a full verdict against the happiness of human life. They declare that all mankind is united by misery, in some degree, as by (what is less melancholy) the *grave*, to which it leads.

And can this world enchant us still? And can we be born for *this*? Is this a *scene* for *reason*, that emanation of Divinity, to doat on? Is this the fortune, this the cower, to which we should wed an *immortal soul*? Where then is the difference between *reason* and *absurdity*? between *immortality* and the *beasts* that *perish*? Be this their heaven (as properly it is), but not their LORD's, but not man's.

I shall close this discourse with a picture of *life* in *miniature*, that your memories may carry it the better: a picture more melancholy than that of this globe ere well clear of the *chaos*; or labouring afterwards under all the wrongs and disgraces that an universal *deluge* could inflict.

Behold a world! *where* the inhabitants are not differenced by happiness and misery; but only by the different *degrees* and various *colours* of misery universal: *where* the *memory* is clouded with black ideas of the past; the *imagination* overlooks the present; and the *understanding*, through mercy, is blinded to the future: *where* every *passion* may be called *legion*, for its evils are

Thoughts with regard to the mind.

many: *where* men almost universally lay aside *intellectual* pleasures; are most ardent desirers of happiness, and yet subvert it on the most impotent half of their natures: *where* anxiety of thought damps sensual pleasure, and sensual pleasure increases anxiety of thought, and impairs our strength to support it too: *where* the soul and the body are in perpetual hostilities, aggrieving each other, and external accidents seem superfluous to our misery. Thus the poor man, like devoted *Jerusalem*, besieged without and divided within, is a complication of infelicities.

Where success must be procured
 To externals. by our infinite care, and *ruin* follows
 on the contrary; so that all the sad
 choice indulged to mankind, is, of infinite care, or
 destruction. Besides, the more we have of credit,
 wealth, or power, the more we *may* lose; nor is any
 man entirely free from the apprehensions of it; so
 that our possessions *imply*, and *provide* for our mis-
 ery. *Where*, an independent pleasure is very *severe*;
 a dependent, very frail. *Where*, pleasure often ex-
 acts such hardships from her votary, that *austerity*
 cannot improve upon them. *Where*, nothing pleases
 but in prospect; and to please in prospect only, is
 not to disappoint alone, but to *deride* us too.
Where, what *exalts* the spirits shortens life by that
 expence; and what *depresses*, makes the shortest
 life too long. *Where*, days are long, yet life is
 short. *Where*, we stand as in a battle, thousands
 daily falling round us, and yet we forget our own
 mortality; nay, are hardened into an insensibility

of it, by these very proofs of its approach; and start, like *David*, when we hear, *Thou art the man*. *Where*, *experience*, which is truly the greatest blessing of life, is the severest discipline of it too; and *diversion*, which is supposed a blessing, only signifies, that to ourselves we are insupportable. *Where*, *sorrow* is as the stem or root of life; *joy*, but as its flower, expected at remote seasons only, then often blighted, or if it blooms, it blooming dies. *Where*, all is vexatious, or mixed, or fugitive. *Where*, pains assault us, delusions surround us, and terrors hang over us. *Where*, we are *restless* in pursuit, *dissatisfied* in fruition, and *persecuted* with remorse. *Where*, we are ever pursuing, and ever condemning the same things; ever accusing *hope* of its broken faith, and ever trusting on, ever grasping after sensual enjoyments, and ever impairing our appetite for them. *Where*, objects, as well as appetites decay; or if they last, last not to us, through the fickleness of our choice. *Where*, we are yearly burying some favourite amusement or pleasure; and they that succeed are less exquisite, and full as mortal. *Where*, we spend most of our days in climbing the hill of our fortune, which suspends, by labour, any serious thought; and when he have climbed it, and are about to change toil for enjoyment, we start to see our grave so near us on t'other side. *Where*, life with most men is *to come*, till it is *past*.

Where, the grave employments of mankind are but strenuous follies; nor differenced from those of children, but by their magnitude and

To the professions, and nature of things.

their guilt. *Where*, the several occupations of life are but fortifications against *want*, and often frail ones too. *Where*, among *professions*, are the lawyer and the soldier, professors of quarrel and death; fortune and life their prey. *Where*, the infirmities of our *bodies* demand and support one profession; the infirmities of our *mind* another; and the misadventures of our *fortune* constitute an ample portion in the whole world of literature. *Where*, the very *elements* wage war against us, and have their inundation, shipwreck, earthquake, famine, pestilence, volcanos, and conflagration. *Where* we cannot make way from our doors, but through the cries of *indigence* or *disease*. *Where*, hospitals and bedlams are public *necessaries*. *Where*, the very *appellations* of a large part of mankind cannot be *heard* without compassion; *widows!* and *orphans!* *Where* *tears* are a distinction of the whole species from other creatures. *Where*, youth often languishes like a tempest-beaten flower, and age shews its injuries like a blasted oak.

Where, history, for the most part, To history. is nothing but a large field of misfortune, and to dip into almost any page of it, is to dip into blood; into blood, persecutions, inquisitions, treasons, assassinations, sieges, servitudes: or if sometimes a *triumph* breaks thro' this general cloud, as lightning through night, it vanishes almost as soon; and while it lasts, it is a proof and memorial of misery; for what is a *triumph*, but the gay daughter of destruction and death? *Where, hardheartedness* and *lust*, drinking

the tears of believing innocence; and *self-design* and *treachery*, turning every virtue of others to its own interest, and the good man's ruin (which abounds in every record), makes peace more cruel than war. *Where*, *happiness* is such a stranger, that for many ages it was *learning* to seek the true notion of it; and it was *but sought*; it was not *found*, but *revealed* at last. *Where*, the pomps and *prancings* of the mighty, are but the trappings of woe. *Where*, the most shining and *envyed* characters have few of them died a natural death; but furnish theme of tragedy for succeeding generations. Strange! that the same persons should be the objects of our *envy* and *pity* too! strange too! that we should have sighs sufficient for more miseries than our own. *Where*, the most happy would not repeat their course; and he was justly censured who wept over his mighty army as mortal, because not one of that numerous host, but might probably *wish*, before he found his end. *Where*, among the many arguments for a future state, the misery of *this* has been most strongly and universally insisted on in all ages; which demonstrates an acute sense, and too ample a conviction of it. *Where*, crowns have been often *abdicated*: how often in our own annals is the palace changed for the cloister? *Where*, *self-murder*, at certain periods, has been a fashion; nay very extraordinary methods have been taken to restrain even the tender sex from this horror. *Where*, half the travels that have been undertook, half the designs that have been enterprized, half the volumes that have been written, have been re-

fuges from uneasiness of heart; and the *last* are not more the immortal monuments of human wit, than of human infelicity. *Where*, happiness is an *art*, and content is an *art*; what libraries have been written to teach it? Whatever success they have in teaching *that*, they certainly teach us *this*, that unhappiness and discontent are *natural*.

Where, a *smile* is often an ambush, as it was on the face of *Domitian*, To friendship, on which it seldom shone, but when rancour gathered at his heart. *Where*, enmity is sincere, friendship often a name; and it is ruin to trust those whom not to trust is almost a *crime*, as a relation, a friend, a brother! *Where*, many fall from credit, fortune, life, with *Caesar's* exclamation, *And this from thee?* *Where*, provoking our foes has not ruined half so many, as confiding in those of a contrary character. He needs no foe who is entirely at the mercy of his friends. *Where*, more hearts pine away in secret anguish for unkindness from those who should be their comforters, than for any other calamity in life. *Where*, bills of mortality would scarce be mournful, if bills of private calamity were in use. Who has not seen, who has not foreseen, nay, who almost has not felt, a bleeding heart? *Where*, evil arts usurp the name and port of *wisdom*, though scarce worthy to be called *cunning*. Now cunning is but the top of a *fool's* character, and wisdom itself is but the bottom or inferior part of the character of an *honest man*. *Nulla bona, nisi honesta*.

Where, the honest confiding heart takes 2

virgin flower into his bosom, and often finds a sting under it. *Where*, To family affliction. the fond mother *to-day* looks with transport on the reward of her long labour and painful travail, which changes perhaps *to-morrow* the cradle for the grave. *Where*, the feeble father follows a favourite, an only daughter, the delight of his eye! the rest of his age! to her long home, which he perhaps has wished for himself in vain; and sheds those tears on her ashes, which should express his joy for the happy disposal of her in life: or perhaps the case is still worse, he sees her youth, and beauty, and innocence, fallen into arms, to him more dreadful than those of death. *Where*, the son of some great house, its hope, joy, and support, the sole heir of riches, titles, and golden schemes, falls immaturally, grasped by death, as the pillars were by *Sampson*; and the whole structure is sorely shaken, if it does not follow on his fall. *Where*, many a numerous family lives in innocence, peace, plenty, reputation, under the wing of an indulgent, prudent, and industrious father; the father dies, they are scattered like a sheaf of corn when the band is broke, and become the prey of guilt, want, anxiety, and shame. *Where*, the comforts of life have their pangs; their jars, jealousies, interruptions, decays, extinction. *Where*, grudge, animosity, and revenge, wound deep; but deeper (when they wound) relation, friendship, love: for love has its barbarities, and frequently may be mistaken for hatred by its effects. There are sometimes malignant tempers

in families; such *domestic* maladies are like ulcers in the vitals; extremities cannot cure them, they cannot be cut off.

Where, the night is an idle dream, and the day little better. *Where* Mixed every one is *witness* or *patient* of thoughts. affliction; ever telling sad tales of others, till he becomes a tale himself; the tale of a day! and then is utterly forgotten. He *lived and died*, is an epitaph for much the greatest part of mankind. *Where* he that has reached his meridian is one of a thousand, his friends and relations ly dead around him; half of his conversation is gathered from the tomb. What are the gay, young, beautiful, brave, learned, wise, good, in which he once perhaps was rich, what are they? a tear! a sigh! *Where* youth has the pain of *getting*, age of *leaving* its riches; *affection* being rarely strong enough in us to make the parting with them agreeable. *Where* *fears* and *pangs* only give a relish of the contrary; and our pleasure generally as it rises *from*, so it ends in them too. *Where* the pain of *impatience* turns us over to the pain of *satiety*, scarce divided by the *moment* of delight. *Where* pain is oftner sunk by *new* pain, than healed by supervening pleasure. *Where* real evils are *frequent*; imaginary *perpetual*: and the happiest thanks some other's wretchedness, for putting him in mind that he is not the most wretched himself. *Where* I was happy, a few may possibly say; I *shall* be happy, most say; I *am* happy, none: now, if none are happy on the present, it is a demonstration that happiness is absent from

us all. The *present* is all that our parent nature properly gives us; and that, like peevish children, we will not taste: thus between the law of our condition and the perverseness of our temper, we have nothing at all; we are very poor, subsisting, or rather starving our thin happiness on dreams, and shadows of good to come; perhaps, never to come; certainly, never to come proportionate to our conceptions of them. *Where* man snatches such quick and terrible resentment from the smallest occasion, that it resembles the discharge of ordnance at the touch of a reed. *Where* to have any chance for happiness, a man must *possess* the world, or *despise* it: now, the contempt of it, in him that possesses it not, is a cheat; he does *not* heartily contemn it; he mistakes his ill-will for contempt; and, what is as unfortunate, he that possesses it, *does* contemn it; but not from wisdom but weakness, which has not the skill to relish its enjoyments as they deserve. *Where* proud honour stands in the place of *meek religion*; honour that disdains compulsion, and that, consequently, must stand or fall, with inclination and humour: he, therefore, that relies on honour, relies on humour; and he that relies on humour is a fool, and must be a wretch in the end. *Where* the two points the world's wise man aims at, are, first to get the better of *natural instinct*, so as not to be betrayed by it into any humanities, in which he does not find his own immediate account: secondly, to surmount the *prejudices and timorousness of education*, to throw the virtues and vices into one heap, *like a man*; thence to be drawn out, *indiffe-*

rently as interest directs; interest, which is his *God*; and his *bible*, the custom of the world. *Where* many men suppose you a knave, or conclude you a fool, and call you so by their professions of disinterested friendship; by which they only mean to steal your affections, and the good effects of them. *Where* compassion, with some, passes for weakness, and you must suppress your sighs, as in the theatre, not to be laughed at; he is looked on as an *idiot*, who is not above being a *man*. *Where* men seek not the *means* of serving, but an *excuse* for not serving others; and *words* change their nature, and do not *reveal*, but *cover* the mind; the *passions* themselves, those betrayers of truth, are taught to *act a part*; the very *eye* can lye, and that natural *window* of the soul has a screen before it, that you may not see through; he only who discovers his *own interest*, gives you a key to his heart. In a word, *where* the honest man (who alone is worthy of good) if he judges of men by himself, is undone. *This* may be called satire, but, by the same rule, the scripture is so too. *Where* to dissemble injuries is the greatest shock to nature, and shame to honour, yet, at the same time, the greatest *art of life*. *Where* he that has not learned the world, must go out of it, or be a *jest* and an *unfortunate* in it; he that has learned it, has learned it with discipline, and by that time he is well master of the *game*, his *candle* is *put out*. It is hard to learn the world, but harder to unlearn it; and not to unlearn it, will, one day, prove *more fatal*. *Where* we will not believe *yesterday*, but hope favourably from *to morrow*; as

if then there would be a *new sun*, a *new nature*, a *new self*: they *pray* for that, who almost *curse* its fellow. *Where* sorrow is fruitless, and *laughter is mad*. *Where*, at the several *tides* of good fortune, the *head* tells the *heart*, Well, now we are *happy*; which the heart scarce believes, or believes it *implicitly*: whenever we say to ourselves, let us sit down and enjoy life, we discover the cheat, like one deluded by *perspective*, by bringing it to the touch. *Where* multitudes (strange! and ridiculous! but for the horror of it) complain they have nothing to do, when every *step* is a step toward a *grave*, every *minute* an approach to an *eternity*: besides, if men well knew the business of *this* world, and would acquit themselves like masters in it, *want* of time would be their great complaint. Nay, he that lays down but this one simple rule, that he will be in the right where ever he is, or whatever he is about, will never have one idle moment, tho' he has not the important cares of nations, or even of families, on his hands.

Where the *past* is a very dream, and the *future* a sore travel. *Where* the tender mother sheds tears over her helpless infant, and the careful father pours groans over them both; groans conscious of the present, and presaging of the future. *Where* sometimes nations groan, as one man, under a general calamity; nor is the whole earth at all privileged from the severe condition of any one nation of it. *Where* nature is perpetually pouring her children in vast tides out of *time* into *eternity*; and the survivors take the evil and refuse the good; they are

but the more melancholy, not the wiser for it. *Where* we are born with pain, and die with amazement. *Where* life is the *slave of misery*, and yet, most strange and deplorable! the *king of terrors* is death.

Sunt lacrimae rerum, et mentem mortalia tangunt.

Almost the whole book of *Ecclesiastes* might be transcribed as a scriptural support of what is here said; and its author, it is well known, received wisdom as an immediate gift from God, in superiority to all the rest of mankind.

I shall conclude, by saying what is most true, that human life is like a dishonest creditor, it puts off our *youth* and *manhood* with lies from day to day, then owns the cheat, and gives our *age* an absolute denial.

If this account is just, as I think
 The descrip- it is, What is *human happiness*? A
 tion of human word! a notion! a day-dream! a
 happiness. wish! a sigh! a theme to be talked
 of! a mark to be shot at, but never hit! a picture
 in the head. and a pang in the heart of man. *Wisdom* recommends it gravely; *learning* talks of it
 pompously, our *understanding* listens to it eagerly,
 our *affection* pursues it warmly, and our *experience*
 despairs of it irretrievably *Imagination* persuades
 some that they have found it, but it is while their
reason is asleep; *pride* prevails with others to boast
 of it; but it is *only a boast*, by which they may de-
 ceive their neighbours, but not themselves; *felicity*
of constitution, and *suavity of manners*, make the
 nearest approach to it, but it is *only an approach*;

fortune, the nature of things, the infirmities of the body, the passions of the mind, the dependence on others, the prevalence of vice, the very condition of (uncorrected) humanity forbids an embrace. Wine, beauty, music, pomp, study, diversion, business, wisdom, all that sea or land, nature or art, labour or rest can bestow, are but poor expedients to heave off the insupportable load of an hour from the heart of man; the load of an hour from the heir of an eternity! if the young, or unexperienced, or vain, or profligate only, were subject to this weakness, it were something; but when the learned, and wise, and grave, and grey—it shocks! it mortifies! and with shame and pity, my mind turns from its purpose, and goes backward with reverence to throw a veil over the nakedness of my father. In a word, the true notion of human happiness explained, is itself one of the strongest proofs of our misery. For how can we speak more adequately of it, than by saying, it is that of which our despair is as necessary, as our passion for it is vehement and inextinguishable. Now ardently to thirst, and unavoidably to despond, with regard to the same thing, and that thing of consequence supreme, is the consummation of infelicity. I know but one solid pleasure in life, and that is our duty. How miserable then, how unwise, how unpardonable are they, who make that *one a pain*?

The purpose of this discourse, as expressed in the beginning of it, was to put this world in the balance; and examine the value of things on the earth. Now such as is represented, not aggravated, thro'

the whole preceding discourse, is the *general* state of mankind; but it is a state of their *own choice*; and it *may* be, though not wholly reversed, abundantly relieved, exceedingly brightened from the clouds, the thick darkness that hangs upon it; as I shall endeavour to make manifest in the following discourse*; and thus *vindicate providence* from prevailing imputations; and by laying the *two counter-parts* together, infer a *true estimate of human life*.

* The second discourse on this subject, never appeared.

CONJECTURES
ON
ORIGINAL COMPOSITION.

IN A
LETTER
TO THE
AUTHOR
OF
SIR CHARLES GRANDISON.

Si habet aliquod tanquam pabulum studii, et doctrinae, otiosâ senectutae nihil est jucundius. CIC.

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SIR CHARLES GRANDISON.

DEAR SIR,

WE confess the follies of youth without a blush; not so, those of age. However, keep me a little in countenance, by considering, that age wants amusements more, though it can justify them less, than the preceding periods of life. How you may relish the pastime here sent you, I know not. It is miscellaneous in its nature, somewhat licentious in its conduct; and, perhaps, not over important in its end. However, I have endeavoured to make some amends, by digressing into subjects more important, and more suitable to my season of life. A serious thought standing single among many of a lighter nature, will sometimes strike the careless wanderer after amusement only, with useful awe: as monumental marbles scattered in a wide pleasure-garden (and such there are)

will call to recollection those who would never have sought it in a church-yard walk of mournful yews.

To one such monument I may conduct you, in which is a hidden lustre, like the sepulchral lamps of old ; but not like those will this be extinguished, but shine the brighter for being produced, after so long concealment, into open day.

You remember that your worthy patron, and our common friend, put some questions on the *serious drama*, at the same time when he desired our sentiments on *original*, and on *moral* composition. Though I despair of breaking through the frozen obstructions of age, and care's incumbent cloud, into that flow of thought, and brightness of expression, which subjects so polite require ; will I hazard some conjectures on them.

I begin with *original* composition ; and the more willingly, as it seems an original subject to me, who have seen nothing hitherto written on it : but, first, a few thoughts on composition in general. Some are of opinion, that its growth, at present, is too luxuriant ; and that the press is overcharged. Overcharged, I think, it could never be, if none were admitted, but such as brought their imprimatur from *sound understanding*, and the *public good*. Wit indeed, however brilliant, should not be permitted to gaze self-enchanted on its useless charms, in that fountain of fame (if so I may call the press), if beauty is all that it has to boast ; but, like the first *Brutus*, it should sacrifice its most darling offspring to the sacred interests of virtue, and real service of mankind.

This restriction allowed, the more composition the better. To men of letters, and leisure, it is not only a noble amusement, but a sweet refuge; it improves their parts, and promotes their peace: it opens a back-door out of the bustle of this busy and idle world, into a delicious garden of moral and intellectual fruits and flowers; the key of which is denied to the rest of mankind. When stung with idle anxieties, or teased with fruitless impertinence, or yawning over insipid diversions, then we perceive the blessing of a lettered recess. With what a gust do we retire to our disinterested and immortal friends in our closet, and find our minds, when applied to some favourite theme, as naturally and as easily quieted and refreshed, as a peevish child (and peevish children are we all till we fall asleep) when laid to the breast? Our happiness no longer lives on charity; nor bids fair for a fall, by leaning on that most precarious and thorny pillow, another's pleasure, for our repose. How independent of the world is he, who can daily find new acquaintance, that at once entertain and improve him, in the little world, the minute but fruitful creation, of his own mind?

These advantages *composition* affords us, whether we write ourselves, or in more humble amusement peruse the works of others. While we bustle thro' the thronged walks of public life, it gives us a respite, at least, from care; a pleasing pause of refreshing recollection. If the country is our choice, or fate, there it rescues us from *sloth* and *sensuality*, which, like obscene vermin, are apt gradually

to creep unperceived into the delightful bowers of our retirement, and to poison all its sweets. Conscious guilt robs the rose of its scent, the lilly of its lustre; and makes an *Eden* a deflowered and dismal scene.

Moreover, if we consider life's endless evils, what can be more prudent, than to provide for consolation under them? A consolation under them the wisest of men have found in the pleasures of the pen. Witness, among many more, *Thucydides*, *Xenophon*, *Tully*, *Ovid*, *Seneca*, *Pliny the younger*, who says, *In uxoris infirmitate, et amicorum periculo, aut morte turbatus, ad studia, unicum doloris levamentum confugio.* And why not add to these their modern equals, *Chaucer*, *Rawleigh*, *Bacon*, *Milton*, *Clarendon*, under the same shield, unwounded by misfortune, and nobly smiling in distress?

Composition was a cordial to these under the frowns of fortune; but evils there are, which her smiles cannot prevent, or cure. Among these are the languors of old age. If those are held honourable, who in a hand benumbed by time have grasped the just sword in defence of their country, shall they be less esteemed, whose unsteady pen vibrates to the last, in the cause of religion, of virtue, of learning? Both these are happy in *this*, that by fixing their attention on objects most important, they escape numberless little anxieties, and that *taedium vitae* which often hangs so heavy on its evening hours. May not this insinuate some apology for my spilling ink, and spoiling paper, so late in life?

But there are, who write with vigor and success, to the world's delight, and their own renown. These are the glorious fruits where genius prevails. The mind of a man of genius is a fertile and pleasant field, pleasant as *Elysium*, and fertile as *Tempe*; it enjoys a perpetual spring. Of that spring, *originals* are the fairest flowers: *imitations* are of quicker growth, but fainter bloom. *Imitations* are of two kinds; one of nature, one of authors: the first we call *originals*, and confine the term *imitation* to the second. I shall not enter into the curious enquiry of what is, or is not, strictly speaking, *original*; content with what all must allow, that some compositions are more so than others; and the more they are so, I say, the better. *Originals* are, and ought to be, great favourites, for they are great benefactors; they extend the republic of letters, and add a new province to its dominion: *imitators* only give us a sort of duplicates of what we had, possibly much better, before; increasing the mere drug of books, while all that makes them valuable, *knowledge* and *genius*, are at a stand. The pen of an *original* writer, like *Armida's* wand, out of a barren waste calls a blooming spring: out of that blooming spring an *imitator* is a transplant of laurels, which sometimes die on removal, always languish in a foreign soil.

But suppose an *imitator* to be most excellent (and such there are), yet still he but nobly builds on another's foundation; his debt is, at least, equal to his glory; which, therefore, on the balance, cannot be very great. On the contrary, an *original*, tho'

but indifferent (its *originality* being set aside), yet has something to boast; it is something to say with him in *Horace*,

Meo sum pauper in aere;

and to share ambition with no less than *Caesar*, who declared he had rather be the first in a village, than the second at *Rome*.

Still farther: an *imitator* shares his crown, if he has one, with the chosen object of his imitation; an *original* enjoys an undivided applause. An *original* may be said to be of a *vegetable* nature; it rises spontaneously from the vital root of genius; it grows, it is not made: imitations are often a sort of *manufacture* wrought up by those *mechanics*, *art*, and *labour*, out of pre-existent materials not their own.

Again: we read *imitation* with somewhat of his languor, who listens to a twice-told tale: our spirits rouse at an *original*; that is a perfect stranger, and all throng to learn what news from a foreign land: and though it comes, like an *Indian* prince, adorned with feathers only, having little weight; yet of our attention it will rob the more solid, if not equally new: thus every telescope is lifted at a new-discovered star; it makes a hundred astronomers in a moment, and denies equal notice to the sun. But if an *original*, by being as excellent as new, adds admiration to surprize, then are we at the writer's mercy; on the strong wing of his imagination, we are snatched from *Britain* to *Italy*, from climate to climate, from pleasure to pleasure; we have no home, no thought of our own; till the

magician drops his pen: and then falling down into ourselves, we awake to flat realities, lamenting the change, like the beggar who dreamed himself a prince.

It is with thoughts, as it is with words; and with both, as with men; they may grow old, and die. Words tarnished, by passing through the mouths of the vulgar, are laid aside as inelegant, and obsolete. So thoughts, when become too common, should lose their currency; and we should send new metal to the mint; that is, new meaning to the press. The division of tongues at *Babel* did not more effectually debar men from *making themselves a name* (as the scripture speaks), than the too great concurrence or union of tongues will do for ever. We may as well grow good by another's virtue, or fat by another's food, as famous by another's thought. The world will pay its debt of praise but once; and instead of applauding, explode a second demand, as a cheat.

If it is said, that most of the *Latin* classics, and all the *Greek*, except, perhaps, *Homer*, *Pindar*, and *Anacreon*, are in the number of *imitators*, yet receive our highest applause; our answer is, that they, though not *real*, are *accidental originals*; the works they imitated, few excepted, are lost: they, on their father's decease, enter as lawful heirs on their estates in fame: the fathers of our copyists are still in possession; and secured in it, in spite of *Coths*, and flames, by the perpetuating power of the press. Very late must a modern *imitator's* fame arrive, if it waits for their decease.

An *original* enters early on reputation: *fame*, fond of new glories, sounds her trumpet in triumph at its birth; and yet how few are awakened by it into the noble ambition of like attempts? Ambition is sometimes no vice in life; it is always a virtue in composition. High in the towering *Alps* is the fountain of the *Po*; high in fame, and in antiquity, is the fountain of an *imitator's* undertaking; but the river, and the imitation, humbly creep along the vale. So few are our *originals*, that, if all other books were to be burnt, the lettered world would resemble some metropolis in flames, where a few incombustible buildings, a fortress, temple, or tower, lift their heads, in melancholy grandeur, amid the mighty ruin. Compared with this conflagration, old *Omar* lighted up but a small bonfire, when he heated the baths of the Barbarians, for eight months together, with the famed *Alexandrian* library's inestimable spoils, that no profane book might obstruct the triumphant progress of his holy *Alcoran* round the globe

But why are *originals* so few? not because the writer's harvest is over, the great reapers of antiquity having left nothing to be gleaned after them; nor because the human mind's teeming time is past, or because it is incapable of putting forth unprecedented births; but because illustrious examples *engross*, *prejudice*, and *intimidate*. They *engross* our attention, and so prevent a due inspection of ourselves; they *prejudice* our judgment in favour of their abilities, and so lessen the sense of our own;

and they *intimidate* us with the splendor of their renown, and thus under diffidence bury our strength. Nature's impossibilities, and those of diffidence, ly. wide asunder.

Let it not be suspected, that I would weakly insinuate any thing in favour of the moderns, as compared with ancient authors; no, I am lamenting their great inferiority. But, I think, it is no *necessary* inferiority; that it is not from divine destination, but from some cause far beneath the moon*: I think that human souls, through all periods, are equal; that due care, and exertion, would set us nearer our immortal predecessors than we are at present; and he who questions and confutes this, will show abilities not a little tending toward a proof of that equality, which he denies.

After all, the first ancients had no merit in being *originals*: they could *not* be *imitators*. Modern writers have a *choice* to make; and therefore have a merit in their power. They may soar in the regions of *liberty*, or move in the soft fetters of *easy imitation*; and *imitation* has as many plausible reasons to urge, as *pleasure* had to offer to *Hercules*. *Hercules* made the choice of an hero, and *so* became immortal.

Yet let not assertors of classic excellence imagine, that I deny the tribute it so well deserves. He that admires not antient authors, betrays a secret he would conceal, and tells the world, that he does not understand them. Let us be as far from neglecting, as from copying, their admirable

* Enquiry into the life of *Homer*, p. 76.

compositions : sacred be their rights, and inviolable their fame. Let our understanding feed on theirs ; they afford the noblest nourishment : but let them nourish, not annihilate, our own. When we read, let our imagination kindle at their charms ; when we write, let our judgment shut them out of our thoughts ; treat even *Homer* himself, as his royal admirer was treated by the cynic ; bid him stand aside, nor shade our composition from the beams of our own genius ; for nothing *original* can rise, nothing immortal can ripen, in any other sun.

Must we then, you say, not imitate antient authors ? Imitate them, by all means ; but imitate aright. He that imitates the divine *Iliad*, does not imitate *Homer* ; but he who takes the same method, which *Homer* took, for arriving at a capacity of accomplishing a work so great. Tread in his steps to the sole fountain of immortality ; drink where he drank, at the true *Helicon*, that is, at the breast of nature : imitate ; but imitate not the *composition*, but the *man*. For may not this paradox pass into a maxim ? *viz.* “ The less we “ copy the renowned antients, we shall resemble “ them the more.”

But possibly you may reply, that you must either imitate *Homer*, or depart from nature. Not so ; for suppose you was to change place, in time, with *Homer* ; then, if you write naturally, you might as well charge *Homer* with an imitation of you. Can you be said to imitate *Homer* for writing *so*, as you would have written, if *Homer* had never been ? As far as a regard to nature, and

found sense, will permit a departure from your great predecessors; so far, ambitiously, depart from them; the farther from them in *similitude*, the nearer are you to them in *excellence*; you rise by it into an *original*; become a noble collateral, not an humble descendant from them. Let us build our compositions with the spirit, and in the taste, of the antients; but not with the materials: thus will they resemble the structures of *Pericles* at *Athens*, which *Plutarch* commends for having had an air of antiquity as soon as they were built. All eminence, and distinction, lyes out of the beaten road; excursion and deviation, are necessary to find it; and the more remote your path from the highway, the more reputable; if, like poor *Gulliver* (of whom anon) you fall not into a ditch, in your way to glory.

What glory to come near, what glory to reach, what glory (presumptuous thought!) to surpass our predecessors? And is that then in nature absolutely impossible? Or is it not, rather, contrary to nature to fail in it? Nature herself sets the ladder, all wanting is our ambition to climb. For by the bounty of nature we are as strong as our predecessors; and by the favour of time (which is but another round in nature's scale) we stand on higher ground. As to the *first*, were *they* more than men? or are *we* less? Are not our minds cast in the same mould with those before the flood? The flood affected matter; mind escaped. As to the *second*; though we are moderns, the world is an antient; more antient far, than when they,

whom we most admire, filled it with their fame. Have we not their beauties, as stars to guide; their defects, as rocks to be shunned; the judgment of ages on both, as a chart to conduct, and a sure helm to steer us in our passage to greater perfection than theirs? And shall we be stopt in our rival pretensions to fame by this just reproof?

Stat contra, dicitque tibi tua pagina, fur es. MART. It is by a sort of noble contagion, from a general familiarity with their writings, and not by any particular sordid theft, that we can be the better for those who went before us. Hope we from plagiarism, any dominion in literature; as that of *Rome* arose from a nest of thieves?

Rome was a powerful ally to many states; antient authors are our powerful allies; but we must take heed, that they do not succour, till they enslave, after the manner of *Rome*. Too formidable an idea of their superiority, like a spectre, would fright us out of a proper use of our wits; and dwarf our understanding, by making a giant of theirs. Too great awe for them lays genius under restraint, and denies it that free scope, that full elbow-room, which is requisite for striking its most masterly strokes. Genius is a master workman, learning is but an instrument; and an instrument, though most valuable, yet not always indispensable. Heaven will not admit of a partner in the accomplishment of some favourite spirits; but rejecting all human means, assumes the whole glory to itself. Have not some, though not famed for erudition, *so* written, as almost to persuade us, that they shone brighter,

and soared higher, for escaping the boasted aid of that proud ally?

Nor is it strange; for what, for the most part, mean we by genius, but the power of accomplishing great things without the means generally reputed necessary to that end? A *genius* differs from a *good understanding*, as a magician from a good architect; *that* raises his structure by means invisible; *this*, by the skilful use of common tools. Hence genius has ever been supposed to partake of something divine. *Nemo unquam vir magnus fuit, sine aliquo afflatu divino.*

Learning, destitute of this superior aid, is fond, and proud, of what has cost it much pains; is a great lover of rules, and boaster of famed examples: as beauties less perfect, who owe half their charms to cautious art, learning inveighs against natural unstudied graces, and small harmless inaccuracies, and sets rigid bounds to that liberty, to which genius often owes its supreme glory; but the no-genius its frequent ruin. For unprescribed beauties, and unexampled excellence, which are characteristics of *genius*, ly without the pale of *learning's* authorities and laws; which pale, genius must leap to come at them: but by that leap, if genius is wanting, we break our necks; we lose that little credit, which possibly we might have enjoyed before. For rules, like crutches, are a needful aid to the lame, though an impediment to the strong. A *Homer* cast them away; and, like his *Achilles*,

Jura negat sibi nata, nihil non arrogat,
by native force of mind. There is something in

poetry beyond prose-reason; there are mysteries in it not to be explained, but admired; which render mere prose-men infidels to their divinity. And here pardon a second paradox; viz. "Genius often then
 "deserves most to be praised, when it is most sure
 "to be condemned; that is, when its excellence,
 "from mounting high, to weak eyes is quite out
 "of sight."

If I might speak farther of learning, and genius, I would compare genius to virtue, and learning to riches. As riches are most wanted where there is least virtue; so learning where there is least genius. As virtue without much riches can give happiness, so genius without much learning can give renown. As it is said in *Terence*, *Pecuniam negligere interdum maximum est lucrum*; so to a neglect of learning, genius sometimes owes its greater glory. Genius, therefore, leaves but the second place, among men of letters, to the learned. It is their merit, and ambition, to fling light on the works of genius, and point out its charms. We most justly reverence their informing radius for that favour; but we must much more admire the radiant stars pointed out by them.

A star of the first magnitude among the moderns was *Shakespeare*; among the antients, *Pindar*; who (as *Vossius* tells us) boasted of his no-learning, calling himself the eagle, for his flight above it. And such genii as these may, indeed, have much reliance on their own native powers. For genius may be compared to the natural strength of the body; learning to the superinduced accoutrements

of arms: if the first is equal to the proposed exploit, the latter rather incumbers, than assists; rather retards, than promotes the victory. *Sacer nobis inest Deus*, says *Seneca*. With regard to the moral world, *conscience*; with regard to the intellectual, *genius*, is that god within. Genius can set us right in composition, without the rules of the learned; as conscience sets us right in life, without the laws of the land: *this*, singly, can make us good, as men: *that*, singly, as writers, can, sometimes, make us great.

I say, sometimes, because there is a genius which stands in need of learning to make it shine. Of genius there are two species, an earlier, and a later; or call them *infantine*, and *adult*. An adult genius comes out of nature's hand, as *Pallas* out of *Jove's* head, at full growth, and mature: *Shakspeare's* genius was of this kind: on the contrary, *Swift* stumbled at the threshold, and set out for distinction on feeble knees; he was an infantine genius; a genius which, like other infants, must be nursed and educated, or it will come to nought: learning is its nurse and tutor; but this nurse may over-lay with an indigested load, which smothers common sense; and this tutor may mislead, with pedantic prejudice, which vitiates the best understanding. As too great admirers of the fathers of the church have sometimes set up their authority against the true sense of scripture; so too great admirers of the classical fathers have sometimes set up their authority, or example, against reason.

*Neve minor, neu sit quinto productior actu
Fabula.*

So says *Horace*, so says antient example. But reason has not subscribed. I know but one book that can justify our implicit acquiescence in it: and (by the way) on that book a noble disdain of undue deference to prior opinion has lately cast, and is still casting, a new and inestimable light.

But, superstition for our predecessors set aside, the classics are for ever our rightful and revered masters in *composition*, and our understandings bow before them: but when? when a master is wanted; which, sometimes, as I have shown, is not the case. Some are pupils of nature only, nor go farther to school: from such we reap often a double advantage; they not only rival the reputation of the great antient authors, but also reduce the number of mean ones among the moderns. For when they enter on subjects which have been in former hands, such is their superiority, that, like a tenth wave, they overwhelm, and bury in oblivion all that went before: and thus not only enrich and adorn, but remove a load, and lessen the labour, of the lettered world.

“But,” say you, “since *originals* can arise from genius only, and since genius is so very rare, it is scarce worth while to labour a point so much, from which we can reasonably expect so little.” To show that genius is not so very rare as you imagine, I shall point out strong instances of it in a far distant quarter from that mentioned above. The minds of the schoolmen were almost as much cloi-

stered as their bodies ; they had but little learning, and few books ; yet may the most learned be struck with some astonishment at their so singular natural sagacity, and most exquisite edge of thought. Who would expect to find *Pindar* and *Scotus*, *Shakespeare* and *Aquinas*, of the same party ? Both equally shew an *original*, unindebted, energy ; the *vigor igneus*, and *coelestis origo*, burns in both, and leaves us in doubt whether genius is more evident in the sublime flights and beauteous flowers of poetry, or in the profound penetration, and marvelous keen and minute distinctions, called the thorns of the schools. There might have been more able consuls called from the plough, than ever arrived at that honour : many a genius, probably, there has been, which could neither write nor read. So that genius, that supreme lustre of literature, is less rare than you conceive.

By the praise of genius we detract not from learning ; we detract not from the value of gold, by saying that diamond is greater still. He who d. sregards learning, shows that he wants its aid : and he that overvalues it, shows that its aid has done him harm. Overvalued indeed it cannot be, if genius, as to *composition*, is valued more. Learning we thank, genius we revere ; that gives us pleasure, this gives us rapture ; that informs, this inspires ; and is itself inspired ; for genius is from heaven, learning from man : *this* set us above the low, and illiterate ; *that*, above the learned, and polite. Learning is borrowed knowledge ; genius is knowledge innate, and quite our own. Therefore, as *Bacon* observes,

it may take a nobler name, and be called wisdom; in which sense of wisdom, some are born wise.

But here a caution is necessary against the most fatal of errors in those automaths, those self-taught philosophers of our age, who set up genius, and often mere *fancied* genius, not only above human learning, but divine truth. I have called genius wisdom; but let it be remembered, that in the most renowned ages of the most refined heathen wisdom (and theirs is not Christian) *the world by wisdom knew not GOD, and it pleased GOD by the foolishness of preaching to save those that believed.* In the fairyland of fancy, genius may wander wild; there it has a creative power, and may reign arbitrarily over its own empire of chimeras. The wide field of nature also lyes open before it, where it may range unconfin'd, make what discoveries it can, and sport with its infinite objects uncontrouled, as far as visible nature extends, painting them as wantonly as it will: but what painter of the most unbounded and exalted genius can give us the true portrait of a seraph? He can give us only what by his own, or others eyes, has been seen; though that indeed infinitely compounded, raised, burlesqued, dishonoured, or adorned. In like manner, who can give us divine truth unrevealed? much less should any presume to set aside divine truth when revealed, as incongruous to their own sagacities.—Is this too serious for my subject? I shall be more so before I close.

Having put in a caveat against the most fatal of

errors, from the too great indulgence of genius, return we now to that too great suppression of it, which is detrimental to composition, and endeavour to rescue the writer, as well as the man. I have said, that some are born wise; but they, like those that are born rich, by neglecting the cultivation and produce of their own possessions, and by running in debt, may be beggared at last, and lose their reputations, as younger brothers estates, not by being born with less abilities than the rich heir, but at too late an hour.

Many a great man has been lost to himself and the public, purely because great ones were born before him. *Hermias*, in his collections on *Homer's* blindness, says, that *Homer*, requesting the gods to grant him a sight of *Achilles*, that hero rose, but in armour so bright, that it struck *Homer* blind with the blaze. Let not the blaze of even *Homer's* muse darken us to the discernment of our own powers; which may possibly set us above the rank of *imitators*; who, though most excellent, and even immortal (as some of them are) yet are still but *Dii minorum gentium*, nor can expect the largest share of incense, the greatest profusion of praise, on their secondary altars.

But farther still: a spirit of *imitation* hath many ill effects; I shall confine myself to three. *First*, It deprives the liberal and politer arts of an advantage which the mechanic enjoy: in these, men are ever endeavouring to go beyond their predecessors; in the former, to follow them. And since copies surpass not their *originals*, as streams rise not

higher than their spring, rarely so high; hence, while arts mechanic are in perpetual progress and encrease, the liberal are in retrogradation, and decay. *These* resemble pyramids, are broad at bottom, but lessen exceedingly as they rise; *those* resemble rivers, which, from a small fountain-head, are spreading ever wider and wider, as they run. Hence it is evident, that different portions of understanding are not (as some imagine) allotted to different periods of time; for we see, in the same period, understanding rising in one set of artists, and declining in another. Therefore *nature* stands absolved, and our inferiority in composition must be charged on ourselves.

Nay, so far are we from comp'ying with a necessity which nature lays us under, that, *secondly*, by a spirit of *imitation* we counteract nature, and thwart her design. She brings us into the world all *originals*: no two faces, no two minds, are just alike; but all bear nature's evident mark of separation on them. Born *originals*, how comes it to pass that we die *copies*? That meddling ape *imitation*, as soon as we come to years of *indiscretion* (so let me speak), snatches the pen, and blots out nature's mark of separation, cancels her kind intention, destroys all mental individuality; the lettered world no longer consists of singulars, it is a medly, a mass; and a hundred books at bottom are but one. Why are monkies such masters of mimicry? why receive they such a talent at imitation? Is it not as the *Spartan* slaves received a

licence for ebriety ; that their betters might be ashamed of it.

The *third* fault to be found with a spirit of *imitation* is, that with great incongruity it makes us poor, and proud : makes us think little, and write much ; gives us huge folios, which are little better than more reputable cushions to promote our repose. Have not some sevenfold volumes put us in mind of *Ovid's* sevenfold channels of the *Nile* at the conflagration ?

Ostia septem

Pulverulenta vacant septem sine fumine valles.

Such leaden labours are like *Lycurgus's* iron money, which was so much less in value than in bulk, that it required barns for strong-boxes, and a yoke of oxen to draw five hundred pounds.

But notwithstanding these disadvantages of *imitation*, imitation must be the lot (and often an honourable lot it is) of most writers. If there is a famine of *invention* in the land, like *Joseph's* brethren, we must travel far for food ; we must visit the remote and rich antients ; but an inventive genius may safely stay at home ; that, like the widow's cruise, is divinely replenished from within ; and affords us a miraculous delight. Whether our own genius be such, or not, we diligently should enquire, that we may not go a begging with gold in our purse : for there is a mine in man which must be deeply dug, ere we can conjecture its contents. Another often sees that in us which we see not ourselves ; and may there not be that in us which is unseen by both ? That there may, chance.

often discovers, either by a luckily chosen theme, or a mighty premium, or an absolute necessity of exertion, or a noble stroke of emulation from another's glory ; as that on *Thucydides* from hearing *Herodotus* repeat part of his history at the *Olympic* games : had there been no *Herodotus*, there might have been no *Thucydides*, and the world's admiration might have begun at *Livy*, for excellence in that province of the pen. *Demosthenes* had the same stimulation on hearing *Callistratus* ; or *Tully* might have been the first of consummate renown at the bar

Quite clear of the dispute concerning *antient and modern learning*, we speak not of performance, but powers. The modern powers are equal to those before them ; modern performance in general is deplorably short. How great are the names just mentioned ? Yet who will dare affirm, that as great may not rise up in some future, or even in the present age ? Reasons there are why talents may not *appear*, none why they may not *exist*, as much in one period as another : an evocation of vegetable fruits depends on rain, air, and sun ; an evocation of the fruits of genius no less depends on externals. What a marvellous crop bore it in *Greece*, and *Rome* ? And what a marvellous sunshine did it there enjoy ? What encouragement from the nature of their governments, and the spirit of their people ? *Virgil* and *Horace* owed their divine talents to Heaven ; their immortal works to men ; thank *Mæcenas* and *Augustus* for them. Had it not been for these, the genius of those poets had lain buried in their ashes.

Athens expended on her theatre, painting, sculpture, and architecture, a tax levied for the support of a war. *Caesar* dropt his papers when *Tully* spoke; and *Philip* trembled at the voice of *Demosthenes*: and has there arisen but one *Tully*, one *Demosthenes*, in so long a course of years? The powerful eloquence of them both in one stream, should never bear me down into the melancholy persuasion, that several have not been born, tho' they have not emerged. The sun as much exists in a cloudy day, as in a clear; it is outward, accidental circumstances, that with regard to genius either in nation, or age,

Collectas fugat nubes, solemque reducit. VIRG.

As great, perhaps greater, than those mentioned (presumptuous as it may sound) may possibly arise; for who hath fathomed the mind of man? Its bounds are as unknown, as those of the creation; since the birth of which, perhaps, not one has so far exerted, as not to leave his possibilities beyond his attainments, his powers beyond his exploits. Forming our judgments altogether by what *has* been done. without knowing, or at all inquiring, what possibly *might* have been done, we naturally enough fall into too mean an opinion of the human mind. If a sketch of the divine *Iliad* before *Homer* wrote, had been given to mankind by some superior being, or otherwise, its execution would, probably, have appeared beyond the power of man. Now to surpass it we think impossible. As the first of these opinions would evidently have been a mistake, why may not the second be so too? both are

founded on the same bottom ; on our ignorance of the possible dimensions of the mind of man.

Nor are we only ignorant of the dimensions of the human mind in general, but even of our own. That a man may be scarce less ignorant of his own powers, than an oyster of its pearl, or a rock of its diamond ; that he may possess dormant, unsuspected abilities, till awakened by loud calls, or stung up by striking emergencies, is evident from the sudden eruption of some men out of perfect obscurity, into public admiration, on the strong impulse of some animating occasion ; not more to the world's great surprise, than their own. Few authors of distinction but have experienced something of this nature, at the first beamings of their yet unsuspected genius on their hitherto dark composition ; the writer starts at it, as at a lucid meteor in the night ; is much surprised ; can scarce believe it true. During his happy confusion, it may be said to him as to *Eve* at the lake,

What there thou seest, fair creature, is thyself. MILT.

Genius, in this view, is like a dear friend in our company under disguise ; who, while we are lamenting his absence, drops his mask, striking us, at once, with equal surprize and joy. This sensation, which I speak of in a writer, might favour, and so promote, the fable of poetic inspiration : a poet of a strong imagination, and stronger vanity, on feeling it, might naturally enough realize the world's mere compliment and think him'elf truly inspired. Which is not improbable ; for enthusiasts of all kinds do no less.

Since it is plain that men may be strangers to their own abilities; and by thinking meanly of them without just cause, may possibly lose a name, perhaps a name immortal; I would find some means to prevent these evils. Whatever promotes virtue, promotes something more, and carries its good influence beyond the *moral* man: to prevent these evils, I borrow two golden rules from *ethics*, which are no less golden in *composition*, than in life. 1st, *Know thyself*; 2dly, *Reverence thyself*. I design to repay *ethics* in a future letter, by two rules from *rhetoric* for its service.

1st, *Know thyself*. Of ourselves it may be said, as *Martial* says of a bad neighbour,

Nill tam prope, precutque nobis.

Therefore dive deep into thy bosom; learn the depth, extent, bias and full force of thy mind; contract full intimacy with the stranger within thee; excite and cherish every spark of intellectual light and heat, however smothered under former negligence, or scattered through the dull, dark mass of common thoughts; and collecting them into a body, let thy genius rise (if a genius thou hast) as the sun from chaos; and if I should then say, like an *Indian*, *worship it*, (though too bold), yet should I say little more than my second rule enjoins, (*viz.*) *Reverence thyself*.

That is let not great examples or authorities browbeat thy reason into too great a diffidence of thyself: thyself so reverence, as to prefer the native growth of thy own mind to the richest import from abroad; such borrowed riches make us poor. The

man who thus reverences himself, will soon find the world's reverence to follow his own. His works will stand distinguished; his the sole property of them; which property alone can confer the noble title of an *author*; that is, of one who (to speak accurately) *thinks*, and *composes*; while other invaders of the press, how voluminous and learned soever, (with due respect be it spoken) only *read* and *write*.

This is the difference between those two luminaries in literature, the well-accomplished scholar, and the divinely-inspired enthusiast; the *first* is, as the bright morning star; the *second*, as the rising sun. The writer who neglects those two rules above, will never stand alone; he makes one of a group, and thinks in wretched unanimity with the throng: incumbered with the notions of others, and impoverished by their abundance, he conceives not the least embryo of new thought; opens not the least vista through the gloom of ordinary writers, into the bright walks of rare imagination, and singular design; while the true genius is crossing all public roads into fresh untrodden ground; he, up to the knees in antiquity, is trading the sacred footsteps of great examples, with the blind veneration of a bigot saluting the papal toe; comfortably hoping full absolution for the sins of his own understanding, from the powerful charm of touching his idol's infallibility.

Such meanness of mind, such prostration of our own powers, proceeds from too great admiration of others. Admiration has generally a degree of

two very bad ingredients in it; of ignorance, and of fear; and does mischief in composition, and in life. Proud as the world is, there is more superiority in it *given*, than *assumed*: and its grandees of all kinds owe more of their elevation to the littleness of others minds, than to the greatness of their own. Were not prostrate spirits their voluntary pedestals, the figure they make among mankind would not stand so high. *Imitators* and *translators* are somewhat of the pedestal-kind, and sometimes rather raise their *original's* reputation, by showing him to be by them inimitable, than their own. *Homer* has been translated into most languages: *Ælian* tells us, that the *Indians* (hopeful tutors!) have taught him to speak their tongue. What expect we from them? Not *Homer's Achilles*, but something, which, like *Patroclus*, assumes his name, and, at his peril, appears in his stead: nor expect we *Homer's Ulysses*, gloriously bursting out of his cloud into royal grandeur; but an *Ulysses* under disguise, and a beggar to the last. Such is that inimitable father of poetry, and oracle of all the wise, whom *Lycurgus* transcribed; and for an annual public recital of whose works *Solen* enacted a law; that it is much to be feared, that his so numerous translations are but as the published testimonials of so many nations, and ages, that this author so divine is untranslated still.

But here,

Cynthia aurem

Vellit, —

VIRG.

and demands justice for his favourite, and ours.

Great things he has done; but he might have done greater. What a fall is it from *Homer's* numbers, free as air, lofty and harmonious as the spheres, into childish shackles, and tinkling sounds! But, in his fall, he is still great——

Nor appears

Less than archangel ruin'd, and th' excess

Of glory' obscur'd.——

MILT.

Had *Milton* never wrote, *Pope* had been less to blame: but when in *Milton's* genius, *Homer*, as it were, personally rose to forbid *Britons* doing him that ignoble wrong; it is less pardonable, by that effeminate decoration, to put *Achilles* in petticoats a second-time: how much nobler had it been, if his numbers had rolled on in full flow, through the various modulations of *masculine* melody, into those grandeurs of solemn-sound, which are indispensably demanded by the native dignity of heroic song? how much nobler, if he had resisted the temptation of that *Gothic* daemon, which modern poesy tasting, became mortal? O how unlike the deathless, divine harmony of three great names (how justly joined!), of *Milton*, *Greece*, and *Rome*? His verse, but for this little speck of mortality, in its extreme parts, as his hero had in his heel; like him, had been invulnerable, and immortal. But, unfortunately, *that* was undipt in *Helicon*; as *this*, in *Styx*. Harmony as well as eloquence is essential to poesy; and a murder of his music is putting half *Homer* to death. *Blank* is a term of diminution; what we mean by blank verse, is, verse unfallen, uncurs'd; verse reclaimed, reenthroned in the

true *language of the gods*; who never thundered, nor suffered their *Homer* to thunder in rhyme: and therefore, I beg you, my friend, to crown it with some nobler term; nor let the greatness of the thing ly under the defamation of such a name.

But supposing *Pope's Iliad* to have been perfect in its kind; yet it is a *translation* still; which differs as much from an *original*, as the moon from the sun.

——*Rhorben alieno jusserrat igne*

Imperi, soleque suo.

CLAUD.

But as nothing is more easy than to write originally wrong; originals are not here recommended, but under the strong guard of my first rule——

Know thyself. *Lucian*, who was an original, neglected not this rule, if we may judge by his reply to one who took some freedom with him. He was, at first, an apprentice to a statuary; and when he was reflected on as such, by being called *Prometheus*, he replied, “I am indeed the inventor of “new work, the model of which I owe to none; “and, if I do not execute it well, I deserve to be “torn by twelve vultures, instead of one.”

If so, O *Gulliver*! dost thou not shudder at thy brother *Lucian's* vultures hovering over thee? Shudder on! they cannot shock thee more, than decency has been shocked by thee. How have thy *Houyhnhnms* thrown thy judgment from its seat, and laid thy imagination in the mire? in what ordure hast thou dipt thy pencil? What a monster hast thou made of the

——*Human face divine?*

MILT.

This writer has so satirised human nature, as to give a demonstration in himself, that it deserves to be satirised. But, say his wholesale admirers, Few could *so* have written: true, and fewer *would*. If it required great abilities to commit the fault, greater still would have saved him from it. But whence arise such warm advocates for such a performance? From hence, *viz.* before a character is established, merit makes fame; afterwards fame makes merit. *Swift* is not commended for this piece, but this piece for *Swift*. He has given us some beauties which deserve all our praise: and our comfort is, that his faults will not become common; for none can be guilty of them, but who have wit as well as reputation to spare. His wit had been less wild, if his temper had not jostled his judgment. If his favourite *Honyhunnus* could write, and *Swift* had been one of them, every horse with him would have been an ass, and he would have written a panegyric on mankind, saddling with much reproach the present heroes of his pen: on the contrary, being born amongst men, and, of consequence, piqued by many, and peevish at more, he has blasphemed a nature little lower than that of angels, and assumed by far higher than they: but surely the contempt of the world is not a greater virtue, than the contempt of mankind is a vice. Therefore I wonder that, tho' forborn by others, the laughter-loving *Swift* was not reproved by the venerable dean, who could sometimes be very grave.

For I remember, as I and others were taking

with him an evening's walk, about a mile out of *Dublin*, he stopt short; we passed on: but perceiving that he did not follow us, I went back; and found him fixed as a statue, and earnestly gazing upward at a noble elm, which in its uppermost branches was much withered, and decayed. Pointing at it, he said, "I shall be like that tree. I shall die at top." As in this he seemed to prophesy like the Sybils; it, like one of them, he had burnt part of his works especially *this* blasted branch of a noble genius, like her too, he might have risen in his demand for the rest.

Would not his friend *Pope* have succeeded better in an *original* attempt? Talents untried, are talents unknown. All that I know, is, that, contrary to these sentiments, he was not only an avowed professor of imitation, but a zealous recommender of it also. Nor could he recommend any thing better, except emulation to those who write. One of these, all writers must call to their aid; but aids they are of unequal repute. Imitation is inferiority confessed; emulation is superiority contested, or denied; imitation is servile, emulation generous; that fetters, this fires; that may give a name, this, a name immortal: this made *Athens* to succeeding ages the rule of taste, and the standard of perfection. Her men of genius struck fire against each other; and kindled by conflict, into glories, which no time shall extinguish. We thank *Eschylus* for *Sophocles*; and *Parrhasius* for *Zeuxis*; emulation, for both. That bids us fly the general fault of *imitators*; bids us not be struck with the loud report of former

fame, as with a knell, which damps the spirits; but as with a trumpet, which inspires ardor to rival the renowned. Emulation exhorts us, instead of learning our discipline for ever, like raw troops under antient leaders in composition, to put those laurel'd veterans in some hazard of losing their superior posts in glory.

Such is emulation's high-spirited advice, such her immortalizing call. *Pope* would not hear, pre-engaged with imitation, which blessed him with all her charms. He chose rather, with his namesake of *Greece*, to triumph in the old world, than to look out for a new. His taste partook the error of his religion; it denied not worship to saints and angels; that is, to writers, who, canonized for ages, have received their apotheosis from established and universal fame. True poesy, like true religion, abhors idolatry: and though it honours the exemplary, and takes them willingly (yet cautiously) as guides in the way to glory; real, though unexampled, excellence is its only aim; nor looks it for any inspiration less than divine.

Though *Pope's* noble muse may boast her illustrious descent from *Homer*, *Virgil*, *Horace*, yet is an *original* author more nobly born. As *Tacitus* says of *Curtius Rufus*, an *original* author is born of himself, is his own progenitor, and will probably propagate a numerous offspring of imitators, to eternize his glory; while mule-like imitators die without issue. Therefore, though we stand much obliged for his giving us an *Homer*, yet had he doubled his obligation, by giving us—a *Pope*.

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Had he a strong imagination, and the true sublime? That granted, we might have had two *Homers* instead of one, if longer had been his life; for I heard the dying swan talk over an epic plan a few weeks before his decease.

Bacon, under the shadow of whose great name I would shelter my present attempt in favour of *originals*, says, "Men seek not to know their own stock and abilities; but fancy their possessions to be greater, and their abilities less, than they really are." Which is in effect saying, "That we ought to exert more than we do; and that, on exertion, our probability of success is greater than we conceive."

Nor have I *Bacon's* opinion only, but his assistance too, on my side. His mighty mind travelled round the intellectual world; and, with a more than eagle's eye, saw, and has pointed out, blank spaces, or dark spots in it, on which the human mind never shone: some of those have been enlightened since; some are benighted still.

Moreover, so boundless are the bold excursions of the human mind, that in the vast void beyond real existence, it can call forth shadowy beings, and unknown worlds, as numerous, as bright, and perhaps, as lasting, as the stars; such quite-original beauties we may call paradisaical,

Natos sine femine flores.

OVID.

When such an ample area for renowned adventure in *original* attempts lies before us, shall we be as mere leaden pipes, conveying to the present age small streams of excellence, from its grand refer-

voir in antiquity ; and those too, perhaps, muddled in the pals ? *Originals* shine like comets ; have no peer in their path ; are rivalled by none, and the gaze of all : all other compositions (if they shine at all) shine in clusters ; like the stars in the galaxy : where, like bad neighbours, all suffer from all ; each particular being diminished, and almost lost, in the throng.

If thoughts of this nature prevailed ; if antients and moderns were no longer considered as masters and pupils, but as hard-matched rivals for renown ; then moderns, by the longevity of their labours, might, one day, become antients themselves : and old time, that best weigher of merits, to keep his balance even, might have the golden weight of an *Augustan* age in both his scales : or rather our scale might descend ; and that of antiquity (as a modern match for it strongly speaks) might *kick the beam*.

And why not ? For, consider, *since* an impartial providence scatters talents indifferently, as through all orders of persons, so through all periods of time ; *since*, a marvelous light, unenjoyed of old, is poured on us by revelation, with larger prospects extending our understanding, with brighter objects enriching our imagination, with an inestimable prize setting our passions on fire, thus strengthening every power that enables composition to shine ; *since*, there has been no fall in man on this side *Adami*, who left no works, and the works of all other antients are our auxiliaries against themselves, as being perpetual spurs to our ambition, and shia-

ing lamps in our path to fame; *since*, this world is a school, as well for intellectual, as moral, advance; and the longer human nature is at school, the better scholar it should be; *since*, as the moral world expects its glorious millennium, the world intellectual may hope, by the rules of analogy, for some superior degrees of excellence to crown her latter scenes; nor may it only hope, but must enjoy them too; for *Tully*, *Quintilian*, and all true critics allow, that virtue assists genius, and that the writer will be more able, when better is the man — All these particulars, I say, considered, why should it seem altogether impossible, that heaven's latest editions of the human mind may be the most correct and fair; that the day may come, when the moderns may proudly look back on the comparative darkness of former ages, on the children of antiquity; reputing *Homer* and *Demosthenes*, as the dawn of divine genius; and *Athens* as the cradle of infant fame? What a glorious revolution would this make in the rolls of renown?

What a rant, say you, is here? — I partly grant it: yet, consider, my friend! knowledge physical, mathematical, moral, and divine, increases; all arts and sciences are making considerable advance; with them, all the accommodations, ornaments, delights, and glories of human life; and these are new food to the genius of a polite writer; these are as the root, and composition as the flower; and as the root spreads, and thrives, shall the flower fail? As well may a flower flourish, when the root is dead. It is prudence to read,

genius to relish, glory to surpass, antient authors; and wisdom to try our strength, in an attempt in which it would be no great dishonour to fail.

Why condemned *Mars* his admirable epic to the flames? Was it not because his discerning eye saw some length of perfection beyond it? And what he saw, may not others reach? And who bid fairer than our countrymen for that glory? something new may be expected from *Britons* particularly; who seem not to be more severed from the rest of mankind by the surrounding sea, than by the current in their veins; and of whom little more appears to be required in order to give us *originals*, than a consistency of character, and making their compositions of a piece with their lives. May our genius shine; and proclaim us in that nobler view!

—*minimâ contentos nocte Britannos.* VIRG.

And so it does; for in polite composition, in natural and mathematical knowledge, we have great *originals* already: *Bacon, Bayle, Newton, Shakespear, Milton*, have showed us, that all the winds cannot blow the *British* flag farther, than an original spirit can convey the *British* fame; their names go round the world; and what foreign genius strikes not as they pass? Why should not their posterity embark in the same bold bottom of new enterprise, and hope the same success? Hope it they may; or you must assert, either that those *originals*, which we already enjoy, were written by angels, or deny that we are men. As *Simonides* said to *Fausanias*, reason should say to the writer, “Remember thou art a man.” And for man not to

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grasp at all which is laudable within his reach, is a dishonour to human nature, and a disobedience to the divine ; for as heaven does nothing in vain, its gift of talents implies an injunction of their use.

A friend of mine has obeyed that injunction ; he has relied on himself ; and with a genius, as well moral, as original (to speak in bold terms), has cast out evil spirits, has made a convert to virtue of a species of composition, once most its foe. As the first Christian emperors expelled daemons, and dedicated their temples to the living God.

But you, I know, are sparing in your praise of this author ; therefore I will speak of one, which is sure of your applause. *Shakespear* mingled no water with his wine ; lowered his genius by no vapid imitation ; *Shakespear* gave us a *Shakespear*, nor could the first in antient fame have given us more. *Shakespear* is not their son, but brother ; their equal ; and that in spite of all his faults. Think you this too bold ? Consider, in those antients what is it the world admires ? Not the fewness of their faults, but the number and brightness of their beauties ; and if *Shakespear* is their equal (as he doubtless is) in that, which in them is admired, then is *Shakespear* as great as they ; and not impotence, but some other cause, must be charged with his defects. When we are setting these great men in competition, what but the comparative size of their genius is the subject of our enquiry ? And a giant loses nothing of his size, though he should chance to trip in his race. But it is a compliment to those heroes of antiquity to suppose *Shake-*

Shakeſpear their equal only in dramatic powers; therefore, though his faults had been greater, the ſcale would ſtill turn in his favour. There is at leaſt as much genius on the *British* as on the *Grecian* ſtage, though the former is not ſwept ſo clean; ſo clean from violations not only of the *dramatic*, but *moral* rule; for an honeſt heathen, on reading ſome of our celebrated ſcenes, might be ſeriously concerned to ſee, that our obligations to the religion of nature were cancelled by Chriſtianity.

Johnſon, in the ſerious drama, is as much an imitator, as *Shakeſpear* is an original. He was very learned, as *Sampſon* was very ſtrong, to his own hurt: blind to the nature of tragedy, he pulled down all antiquity on his head, and buried himſelf under it; we ſee nothing of *Johnſon*, nor indeed, of his admired (but alſo murdered) antients; for what ſhone in the hiſtorian is a cloud on the poet; and *Cataline* might have been a good play, if *Salluſt* had never writ.

Who knows whether *Shakeſpear* might not have thought leſs, if he had read more? Who knows if he might not have laboured under the load of *Johnſon*'s learning, as *Enceladus* under *Aetna*? His mighty genius, indeed, thro' the moſt mountainous oppreſſion would have breathed out ſome of his inextinguishable fire; yet, poſſibly, he might not have riſen up into that giant, that much more than common man, at which we now gaze with amazement, and delight. Perhaps he was as learned as his dramatic province required; for whatever other learning he wanted, he was maſter of two

books, unknown to many of the profoundly read, though books, which the last conflagration alone can destroy; the book of nature, and that of man. These he had by heart, and has transcribed many admirable pages of them into his immortal works. These are the fountain-head whence the *Castalian* streams of *original* composition flow; and these are often muddled by other waters, though waters, in their distinct chanel, most wholesome and pure: as two chymical liquors, separately clear as crystal, grow foul by mixture, and offend the sight. So that he had not only as much learning as his dramatic province required, but, perhaps, as it could safely bear. If *Milton* had spared some of his learning, his muse would have gained more glory than he would have lost by it.

Dryden, destitute of *Shakespeare's* genius, had almost as much learning as *Johnson*, and, for the bulk, quite as little taste. He was a stranger to the pathos; and, by numbers, expression, sentiment, and every other dramatic cheat, strove to make amends for it: as if a saint could make amends for the want of conscience; a soldier for the want of valor; or a vestal of modesty. The noble nature of tragedy disclaims an equivalent; like virtue, it demands the heart; and *Dryden* had none to give. Let epic poets *think*, the tragedian's point is rather to *feel*; such distant things are a tragedian and a poet, that the latter indulged, destroys the former. Look on *Barnwell* and *Effex*, and see how as to these distant characters *Dryden* excels, and is excelled. But the strongest demonstration of his no-

taste for the buskin, are his tragedies fringed with rhyme; which, in epic poetry, is a sore disease, in the tragic, absolute death. To *Dryden's* enormity, *Pope's* was a light offence. As lacemen are foes to mourning, these two authors, rich in rhyme, were no great friends to those solemn ornaments which the noble nature of their works required.

Must rhyme then, say you, be banished? I wish the nature of our language could bear its entire expulsion; but our lesser poetry stands in need of a toleration for it; it raises that, but sinks the great; as spangles adorn children, but expose men. Prince *Henry*, bespangled all over in his oylet-hole suit, with glittering pins; and an *Achilles*, or an *Almanzor* in his *Gothic* array, are very much on a level; as to the majesty of the poet and the prince. *Dryden* had a great, but a general capacity; and as for a general genius, there is no such thing in nature: a genius implies the rays of the mind concentrated, and determined to some particular point; when they are scattered widely, they act feebly, and strike not with sufficient force, to fire or dissolve the heart. As what comes from the writer's heart reaches ours; so what comes from his head, sets our brains at work, and our hearts at ease. It makes a circle of thoughtful critics, not of distressed patients; and a passive audience is what tragedy requires. Applause is not to be given, but extorted; and the silent lapse of a single tear, does the writer more honour, than the rattling thunder of a thousand hands. Applauding hands and dry eyes (which during *Dryden's* thea-

trical reign often met) are a satire on the writer's talent, and the spectator's taste. When by such judges the laurel is blindly given, and by such a poet proudly received, they resemble an intoxicated host, and his tasteless guests, over some sparkling adulteration, commending their champaign.

But *Dryden* has his glory, though not on the stage: what an inimitable *original* is his ode? A small one, indeed, but of the first lustre, and without a flaw; and, amid the brightest boasts of antiquity, it may find a foil.

Among the brightest of the moderns, Mr *Allison* must take his place. Who does not approach his character with great respect? They who refuse to close with the public in his praise, refuse at their peril. But, if men will be fond of their own opinions, some hazard must be run. He had, what *Dryden* and *Johnson* wanted, a warm, and feeling heart; but being of a grave and bashful nature, through a philosophic reserve, and a sort of moral prudery, he concealed it, where he should have let loose all his fire, and have showed the most tender sensibilities of heart. At his celebrated *Cato*, few tears are shed, but *Cato's* own; which, indeed, are truly great, but unaffecting, except to the noble few who love their country better than themselves. The bulk of mankind want virtue enough to be touched by them. His strength of genius has reared up one glorious image, more lofty, and truly golden, than that in the plains of *Dura*, for cool admiration to gaze at, and warm patriotism (how rare!) to worship; while those two throbbing

pulses of the drama, by which alone it is shown to live, *terror* and *pity*, neglected through the whole, leave our unmolested hearts at perfect peace. Thus the poet, like his hero, through mistaken excellence, and virtue overstrained, becomes a sort of suicide; and that which is most dramatic in the drama, dies. All his charms of poetry are but as funeral flowers, which adorn; all his noble sentiments but as rich spices, which embalm the tragedy deceased.

Of tragedy, pathos is not only the life and soul, but the soul inextinguishable; it charms us through a thousand faults. Decorations, which in this author abound, though they might immortalize other poetry, are the *splendida peccata* which damn the drama; while, on the contrary, the murder of all other beauties is a venial sin, nor plucks the laurel from the tragedian's brow. Was it otherwise, *Shakespeare* himself would run some hazard of losing his crown.

Socrates frequented the plays of *Euripides*; and, what living *Socrates* would decline the theatre, at the representation of *Cato*? *Tully's* assassins found him in his litter, reading the *Medea* of the *Grecian* poet, to prepare himself for death. Part of *Cato* might be read to the same end. In the weight and dignity of moral reflection, *Addison* resembles that poet, who was called the dramatic philosopher; and is himself, as he says of *Cato*, *ambitiously sententious*. But as to the singular talent so remarkable in *Euripides*, at melting down hearts into the tender streams of grief and pity, there the resemblance fails. His beauties sparkle, but do not

warm ; they sparkle as stars in a frosty night. There is, indeed, a constellation in his play ; there is the philosopher, patriot, orator, and poet ; but where is the tragedian ? and, if that is wanting,

Cur in theatrum Cato severe venisti ? MART.

And, when I recollect what passed between him and *Dryden*, in relation to this drama, I must add the next line,

An ideo tantum veneras, ut exires ?

For, when *Addison* was a student at *Oxford*, he sent up his play to his friend *Dryden*, as a proper person to recommend it to the theatre, if it deserved it ; who returned it with very great commendation ; but with his opinion, that, on the stage, it could not meet with its deserved success. But tho' the performance was denied the theatre, it brought its author on the public stage of life. For persons in power inquiring soon after of the head of his college for a youth of parts, *Addison* was recommended, and readily received, by means of the great reputation which *Dryden* had just then spread of him above.

There is this similitude between the poet and the play ; as this is more fit for the closet than the stage ; so, that shone brighter in private conversation than on the public scene. They both had a sort of local excellency, as the heathen gods a local divinity ; beyond such a bound they unadorned ; and these, unadorned. This puts me in mind of *Plato*, who denied *Homer* to the public, that *Homer* which when in his closet, was rarely out of his hand. Thus, though *Cato* is not calculated

to signalize himself in the warm emotions of the theatre, yet we find him a most amiable companion, in our calmer delights of recess.

Notwithstanding what has been offered, this, in many views, is an exquisite piece. But there is so much more of art than nature in it, that I can scarce forbear calling it an exquisite piece of statuary,

Where the smooth chisel all its skill has shown,

To soften into flesh the rugged stone. ADDISON.

That is, where art has taken great pains to labour undramatic matter into dramatic life; which is impossible. However, as it is, like *Pygmalion*, we cannot but fall in love with it, and wish it was alive. How would a *Shakespear* or an *Otway* have answered our wishes? They would have out-done *Prometheus*, and, with their heavenly fire, have given him not only life, but immortality. At their dramas (such is the force of nature) the poet is out of sight, quite hid behind his *Venus*, never thought of, till the curtain falls. Art brings our author forward, he stands before his piece; splendidly indeed, but unfortunately; for the writer must be forgotten by his audience during the representation, if for ages he would be remembered by posterity. In the theatre as in life, delusion is the charm; and we are undelighted, the first moment we are undeceived. Such demonstration have we, that the theatre is not yet opened in which solid happiness can be found by man; because none are more than comparatively good; and folly has a corner in the heart of the wise.

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A genius fond of *ornament* should not be wedded to the tragic muse, which is in *mourning*: we want not to be diverted at an entertainment, where our greatest pleasure arises from the depth of our concern. But whence (by the way) this odd generation of pleasure from pain? The movement of our melancholy passions is pleasant, when we ourselves are safe: we love to be at once, miserable, and unhurt: so are we made; and so made, perhaps, to show us the divine goodness; to show that none of our passions were designed to give us pain. except when being pained is for our advantage on the whole; which is evident from this instance, in which we see, that passions the most painful administer greatly, sometimes, to our delight. Since great names have accounted otherwise for this particular, I wish this solution, though to me probable, may not prove a mistake.

To close our thoughts on *Cato*: he who sees not much beauty in it, has no taste for poetry; he who sees nothing else, has no taste for the stage. Whilst it justifies censure, it extorts applause. It is much to be admired, but little to be felt. Had it not been a tragedy, it had been immortal; as it is a tragedy, its uncommon fate somewhat resembles his, who, for conquering gloriously, was condemned to die. Both shone, but shone fatally; because in breach of their respective laws, the laws of the drama, and the laws of arms. But how rich in reputation must that author be, who can spare a *Cato*, without feeling the loss?

That loss by our author would scarce be felt: it

would be but dropping a single feather from a wing. that mounts him above his contemporaries. He has a more refined, decent, judicious, and extensive genius. than *Pope*, or *Swift*. To distinguish this triumvirate from each other, and, like *Newton*, to discover the different colours in these genuine and meridian rays of literary light, *Swift* is a singular wit, *Pope* a correct poet, *Addison* a great author. *Swift* looked on wit as the *jus divinum* to dominion and sway in the world; and considered as usurpation, all power that was lodged in persons of less sparkling understandings. This inclined him to tyranny in wit; *Pope* was somewhat of his opinion, but was for softening tyranny into lawful monarchy; yet were there some acts of severity in his reign. *Addison*'s crown was elective, he reigned by the public voice:

————— *Volentes*

Per populos dat jura, viamque affectat Olympo VIRG.

But as good books are the medicine of the mind, if we should dethrone these authors, and consider them not in their royal, but medicinal capacity, might it not then be said, that *Addison* prescribed a wholesome and pleasant regimen, which was universally relished, and did much good; that *Pope* preferred a purgative of satire, which though wholesome, was too painful in its operation; and that *Swift* insisted on a large doze of ipercacuanha, which, tho' readily swallowed from the fame of the physician, yet if the patient had any delicacy of taste, he threw up the remedy, instead of the disease.

Addison wrote little in verse; much in sweet, elegant, *Virgilian* prose; so let me call it, since *Longinus* calls *Herodotus* most *Homeric*, and *Thucydides* is said to have formed his style on *Pindar*. *Addison's* compositions are built with the finest materials in the taste of the antients, and (to speak his own language) on truly *classic ground*: and though they are the delight of the present age, yet am I persuaded that they will receive more justice from posterity. I never read him but I am struck with such a disheartening idea of perfection, that I drop my pen. And, indeed, far superior writers should forget his compositions, if they would be greatly pleased with their own.

And yet (perhaps you have not observed it) what is the common language of the world, and even of his admirers, concerning him? they call him an *elegant* writer: that elegance which shines on the surface of his compositions, seems to dazzle their understanding, and render it a little blind to the depth of sentiment which lyes beneath: thus (hard fate!) he loses reputation with them, by doubling his title to it. On subjects the most interesting and important, no author of his age has written with greater, I had almost said, with equal weight: and they who commend him for his elegance, pay him such a sort of compliment by their abstemious praise, as they would pay to *Lucretia*, if they should commend her only for her beauty.

But you say, that you know his value already— You know, indeed, the value of his writings. and close with the world in thinking them immortal;

but, I believe, you know not, that his name would have deserved immortality, though he had never written; and that, by a better title than the pen can give: you know too, that his life was amiable; but, perhaps you are still to learn, that his death was triumphant: that is a glory granted to very few. And the paternal hand of Providence, which sometimes snatches home its beloved children in a moment, must convince us, that it is a glory of no great consequence to the dying individual; that, when it is granted, it is granted chiefly for the sake of the surviving world, which may profit by his pious example, to whom is indulged the strength and opportunity to make his virtue shine out brightest at the point of death: and, here, permit me to take notice, that the world will, probably, profit more by a pious example of lay-extraction, than by one born of the church; the latter being usually taxed with an abatement of influence by the bulk of mankind: therefore to smother a bright example of this superior good influence, may be reputed a sort of murder injurious to the living, and unjust to the dead.

Such an example have we in *Addison*; which, though hitherto suppressed, yet, when once known, is insuppressible, of a nature too rare, too striking to be forgotten. For after a long and manly, but vain struggle with his distemper, he dismissed his physicians, and with them all hopes of life: but with his hopes of life he dismissed not his concern for the living, but sent for a youth nearly related, and finely accomplished, yet not above being the

better for good impressions from a dying friend: he came; but life now glimmering in the socket, the dying friend was silent: after a decent and proper pause, the youth said, "Dear Sir! you sent for me. I believe, and I hope, that you have some commands. I shall hold them most sacred." May distant ages not only hear, but feel the reply! Forcibly grasping the youth's hand, he softly said, "See in what peace a Christian can die." He spoke with difficulty, and soon expired. Through grace divine, how great is man! Through divine mercy, how stingless death! Who would not thus expire?

What an ineffable legacy were those *few dying words* to the youth beloved? What a glorious supplement to his own valuable fragment on the truth of Christianity? What a full demonstration, that his fancy could not feign beyond what his virtue could reach? For when he would strike us most strongly with the grandeur of *Roman* magnanimity, his dying hero is ennobled with this sublime sentiment,

While yet I live, let me not live in vain. CATO.

But how much more sublime is that sentiment when realized in life; when dispelling the languors, and appeasing the pains of a last hour; and brightening with illustrious action the dark avenue, and all-awful confines of an eternity? When his soul scarce animated his body, strong faith, and ardent charity, animated his soul into divine ambition of saving more than his own. It is for our honour and our advantage to hold him high in our esteem; for

the better men are, the more they will admire him; and the more they admire him, the better will they be.

By undrawing the long-closed curtain of his death bed, have I not showed you a stranger in him whom you knew so well? Is not this of your favourite author,

— *Nota major imago?*

VIRG.

His compositions are but a noble preface; the grand work is his death: that is a work which is read in heaven: how has it joined the final approbation of angels to the previous applause of men? how gloriously has he opened a splendid path, thro' fame immortal, into eternal peace? How has he given religion to triumph amidst the ruins of his nature? and, stronger than death, risen higher in virtue, when breathing his last.

If all our men of genius had *so* breathed their last; if all our men of genius, like him, had been men of genius for *eternals*; then had we never been pained by the report of a latter-end—oh! how unlike to this? But a little to balance our pain, let us consider, that such reports as make us at once adore and tremble, are of use, when too many there are, who must tremble before they will adore; and who convince us, to our shame, that the surest refuge of our endangered virtue is in the fears and terrors of the disingenuous human heart.

“ But reports, you say, may be false; and you
 “ farther ask me, If all reports were true, how
 “ came an anecdote of so much honour to human
 “ nature, as mine, to ly so long unknown? What

“inauspicious planet interposed to lay its lustre
“under so lasting and so surprising an eclipse?”

The fact is indisputably true; nor are you to rely on me for the truth of it: my report is but a second edition: it was published before, though obscurely, and with a cloud before it. As clouds before the sun are often beautiful; so this of which I speak. How finely pathetic are those two lines, which this so solemn and affecting scene inspired?

He taught us how to live; and, oh! too high

A price for knowledge, taught us how to die. TICKEL.

With truth wrapped in darkness, so sung our oracle to the public, but explained himself to me: he was present at his patron's death, and that account of it here given he gave to me before his eyes were dry: by what means *Addison taught us how to die*, the poet left to be made known by a late, and less able hand; but one more zealous for his patron's glory: zealous, and impotent, as the poor *Aegyptian*, who gathered a few splinters of a broken boat, as a funeral pile for the great *Pompey*, studios of doing honour to so renowned a name: yet had not this poor plank (permit me, here, so to call this imperfect page) been thrown out, the chief article of his patron's glory would probably have been sunk for ever, and late ages have received but a fragment of his fame: a fragment glorious indeed, for his genius how bright! But to commend him for composition, though immortal, is detraction now; if there our encomium ends: let us look farther to that concluding scene, which spoke human nature not unrelated to the

divine. To that let us pay the long and large arrear of our greatly posthumous applause.

This you will think a long digression; and justly; if that may be called a digression, which was my chief inducement for writing at all: I had long wished to deliver up to the public this sacred deposit, which by providence was lodged in my hands; and I entered on the present undertaking partly as an introduction to that, which is more worthy to see the light; of which I gave an intimation in the beginning of my letter: for this is the *monumental marble* there mentioned, to which I promised to conduct you; this is the *sepulchral lamp*, the long hidden lustre of our accomplished countryman, who now rises, as from his tomb, to receive the regard so greatly due to the dignity of his death; a death to be distinguished by tears of joy; a death which angels beheld with delight.

And shall that, which would have shone conspicuous amid the resplendent lights of Christianity's glorious morn, by these dark days be dropped into oblivion? Dropped it is; and dropped by our sacred, august, and ample register of renown, which has entered in its marble-memoirs the dim splendor of far inferior worth: though so lavish of praise, and so talkative of the dead, yet is it silent on a subject, which (if any) might have taught its unlettered stones to speak: if powers were not wanting, a monument more durable than those of marble, should proudly rise in this ambitious page, to the new, and far nobler *Addison*, than that which you, and the public, have so long, and so much admired:

nor this nation only ; for it is *Europe's Addison*, as well as ours ; though *Europe* knows not half his title to her esteem ; being as yet unconscious that the *dying Addison* far outshines her *Addison immortal*. Would we resemble him ? Let us not limit our ambition to the least illustrious part of his character ; heads, indeed, are crowned on earth ; but hearts only are crowned in heaven : a truth, which in such an *age of authors*, should not be forgotten.

It is piously to be hoped, that this narrative may have some effect, since all listen, when a death-bed speaks ; and regard the person departing as an actor of a part, which the great master of the drama has appointed us to perform to-morrow. This was a *Roscious* on the stage of life ; his exit how great ? Ye lovers of virtue ! *plaudite* : and let us, my friend ! ever “ remember his end, as well as our own, that “ we may never do amiss.” I am,

Dear SIR,

Your most obliged,

humble servant.

A N
E S S A Y
O N
L Y R I C P O E T R Y.

HOW imperfect soever my own * composition may be, yet am I willing to speak a word or two of the nature of *Lyric Poetry*; to shew that I have, at least, some idea of perfection in that kind of poem in which I am engaged; and that I do not think myself *poet* enough entirely to rely on *inspiration* for my success in it.

To our having, or not having, this *idea of perfection* in the poem we undertake, is chiefly owing the merit or demerit of our performances, as also the modesty or vanity of our opinions concerning them. And in speaking of it, I shall shew how it unavoidably comes to pass, that *bad* poets, that is, poets *in general*, are esteemed, and really *are* the most *vain*, the most *irritable*, and most *ridiculous* set of men upon earth. But poetry in its own nature is certainly
—*Non hos quæsitum munus in usus.* VIRG.

He that has an *idea of perfection* in the work he undertakes *may* fail in it; he that has not, *must*: and yet he will be vain. For every little degree of beauty, how *short* or improper soever, will be looked on fondly by him; because it is all pure gains, and more than he promised to himself; and because he has no *test* or *standard* in his judgment, with which to chastise his opinion of it.

* In former editions this Essay was placed before the lyric pieces

Now this *idea of perfection* is in poetry more refined, than in other kinds of writing; and because more refined, therefore more difficult; and because more difficult, therefore more rarely attained; and the non-attainment of it is (as I have said) the source of our vanity. Hence the poetic clan are more *obnoxious to vanity* than others. And from vanity consequentially flows that great sensibility of disrespect, that *quick resentment*, that tender of the mind that kindles at every spark, and justly marks them out for the *genus irritabile* among mankind; and from this combustible temper, this serious anger for no very serious things, things looked on by most as foreign to the important points of life, as consequentially flows that inheritance of *ridicule*, which devolves on them, from generation to generation. As soon as they become authors, they become like *Ben Johnson's* angry boy, and learn the art of quarrel.

—*Concordes animae, dum nocte premuntur;*
Heu! quantum inter se bellum, si lumina vitae
Attigerint, quantas acies, stragemque ciebur?
Qui juvenes! quantas ostentant, aspice, vires.
Ne, pueri! ne tanta animis assuescite bella.
Tuque prior, tu parce, genus qui ducis Olympo,
Sidereo flagrans clypeo, & coelestibus armis,
Projice tela manu, sanguis meus!
Nec te ullae facies, non terruit ipse Typhoeus
Arduus, arma tenens; non te Messapus et Urens,
Contemptorque defum Mezentius. VIRG.

But to return. He that has this idea of perfection in the work he undertakes, however successful

he is, will yet be *modest*; because to rise up to that idea which he proposed for his model, is almost, if not absolutely, impossible.

These two observations account for what may seem as strange, as it is infallibly true; I mean, they shew us why good writers have the lowest, and bad writers the highest opinion of their own performances. They who have only a *partial* idea of this perfection, as their portion of ignorance or knowledge of it is greater or less, have proportionable degrees of modesty or conceit.

Nor, (tho' natural good understanding makes a tolerably just judgment in things of this nature) will the reader judge the worse, for forming to himself a notion of what he ought to expect from the piece he has in hand, before he begins his perusal of it.

The *ode*, as it is the eldest kind of poetry, so it is more spirituous, and more remote from prose, than any other, in *sense, sound, expression, and conduct*. Its thoughts should be uncommon, sublime, and moral; its numbers full, easy, and most harmonious; its expression, pure, strong, and delicate, yet unaffected; and of a *curious felicity* beyond other poems: its conduct should be rapturous, somewhat abrupt and immethodical to a vulgar eye. That apparent order and connexion, which gives form and life to some compositions, takes away the very soul of *this*. Fire, elevation, and select thought, are indispensable; an humble, tame, and vulgar ode is the most pitiful error a pen can commit.

Musa dedit fidibus divos, puerosque deorum.

And as its *subjects* are sublime, its writer's ge-

nus should be so too; otherwise it becomes the meanest thing in writing, *viz.* an *involuntary burlesque*.

It is the genuine character and true merit of the *ode*, a little to startle some apprehensions. Men of cold complexions are very apt to mistake a want of vigor in their imaginations, for a delicacy of taste in their judgments; and, like persons of tender sight, they look on bright objects, in their natural lustre, as too glaring; what is most delightful to a stronger eye, is painful to them. Thus *Imdar*, who has as much logic at the bottom as *Aristotle* or *Euclid*, to some critics has appeared as mad; and must appear so to all, who enjoy no portion of his own divine spirit. Dwarf understandings, measuring others by their own standard, are apt to think they see a monster when they see a man

And, indeed, it seems to be the amends which nature makes to those whom she has not blessed with an elevation of mind, to indulge them in the comfortable mistake, that all is wrong which falls not within the narrow limits of their own comprehensions and relish.

Judgment, indeed, that masculine power of the mind, in *ode*, as in all compositions, should bear the supreme sway; and a beautiful *imagination*, as its mistress, should be subdued to its dominion. Hence, and hence only can proceed the fairest offspring of the human mind.

But then in *ode*, there is this difference from other kinds of poetry; that, there, the *imagination*,

like a very beautiful mistress, is indulged in the appearance of domineering; though the *judgment*, like an artful lover, in reality carries its point; and the less it is suspected of it, it shews the more masterly conduct, and deserves the greater commendation.

* It holds true in this province of writing, as in war, "The more danger, the more honour." It must be very enterprising, it must (in *Shakespeare's* style) have hair-breadth 'scapes; and often tread the very brink of error: nor can it ever deserve the applause of the *real* judge, unless it renders itself obnoxious to the misapprehensions of the *contrary*.

Such is *Casimire's* strain among the moderns, whose lively wit and happy fire is an honour to them. And *Buchanan* might justly be much admired, if any thing more than the sweetness of his numbers, and the purity of his diction, was his own: his original, from which I have taken my motto, through all the disadvantages of a northern prose-translation, is still admirable; and *Cowley* says, as preferable in beauty to *Buchanan*, as *Judea* is to *Scotland*.

Pindar, *Anacreon*, *Sappho*, and *Horace*, are the great masters of *Lyric* poetry among heathen writers. *Pindar's* muse, like *Sacharissa*, is a stately, imperious, and accomplished beauty; equally disdainful the use of art, and the fear of any rival; so intoxicating, that it was the highest commendation that could be given an antient, that he was not afraid to taste of her charms:

Pindarici fontes qui non expalluit hausus.

A danger which *Horace* declares he durst not run.

Anacreon's muse is like *Amoret*, most sweet, natural, and delicate, all over flowers, graces and charms; inspiring complacency, not awe; and she seems to have good-nature enough to admit a rival, which she cannot find.

Sappho's muse, like lady —, is passionately tender and glowing, like oil set on fire, she is *soft* and *warm* in excess. *Sappho* has left us a few fragments only; time has swallowed the rest; but that little which remains, like the remaining jewel of *Cleopatra*, after the other was dissolved at her banquet, may be esteemed (as was that jewel) a sufficient ornament for the goddess of beauty herself.

Horace's muse, (like one I shall not presume to name), is correct, solid and moral; she joins all the sweetness and majesty, all the sense and the fire of the *former*, in the justest proportions and degrees; superadding a felicity of dress entirely her own. She moreover is distinguishable by this particularity, that she abounds in hidden graces, and secret charms, which none but the discerning can discover; nor are any capable of doing full justice in their opinion to her excellencies, without giving the world, at the same time, an incontestable proof of refinement in their own understandings.

But, after all, to the honour of our own country, I must add, that I think Mr *Dryden's* ode on *St Cecilia's* day, inferior to no composition of this kind. Its chief beauty consists in adapting the numbers most happily to the variety of the occasion; those by which he has chosen to express majesty, viz.

*Assumes the god,
Affects to nod,*

And seems to shake the spheres ;

are chosen in the following ode, because the subject of it is great.

For the more harmony, likewise, I chose the frequent return of rhyme ; which laid me under great difficulties. But difficulties overcome, give grace and pleasure. Nor can I account for the pleasure of rhyme in general, (of which the moderns are too fond), but from this truth.

But then the writer must take care that the difficulty is overcome. That is, he must make rhyme consistent with as perfect *sense* and *expression* as could be expected, if he was free from that shackle. Otherwise, it gives neither grace to the work, nor pleasure to the reader, nor, consequently, reputation to the poet.

To sum the whole. *Ode* should be *peculiar*, but not *strained* ; *moral*, but not *flat* ; *natural*, but not *obvious* ; *delicate*, but not *affected* ; *noble*, but not *ambitious* ; *full*, but not *obscure* ; *fiery*, but not *mad* ; *thick*, but not *loaded* in its numbers, which should be most *harmonious*, without the least sacrifice of *expression* or of *sense*. Above all, in this, as in every work of genius, somewhat of an *original* spirit should be, at least, attempted ; otherwise the poet, whose character disclaims *mediocrity*, makes a *secondary* praise his ultimate ambition ; which has something of a contradiction in it. *Originals* only have true life ; and differ as much from the best *imitations*, as *men* from the most animated *pictures* of

them. Nor is what I say at all inconsistent with a due *deference* for the great standards of antiquity; nay, that very *deference* is an argument for it, for doubtless their example is on my side in this matter. And we should rather imitate their example in the general motives and fundamental methods of their working, than in their works themselves. This is a distinction I think not hitherto made, and a distinction of consequence. For the *first* may make us their equals; the *second* must pronounce us their inferiors, even in our utmost success. But the *first* of these prizes is not so readily taken by the *moderns*, as valuables too massy for easy carriage are not so liable to the thief.

The antients had a particular regard to the choice of their *subjects*; which were generally national and great. My subject is in its own nature noble, most proper for an *Englishman*; never more proper than on this occasion; and (what is strange) hitherto unsung.

If I stand not absolutely condemned by my own rules; if I have hit the spirit of *ode* in general; if I cannot think with Mr Cowley, that *music alone, sometimes, makes an excellent ode,*

Versus inopes rerum, nugaeque canorae;

If there is any *thought, enthusiasm, and picture*, which are as the *body, soul, and robe* of poetry; in a word, if in any degree, I have provided rather *food for men, than air for wits*; I hope smaller faults will meet indulgence, for the sake of the design, which is the glory of my country and my king.

And indeed, this may be said, in general, that

great subjects are above being *nice*; that dignity and spirit ever suffer from scrupulous exactness; and that the *minuter* cares effeminate a composition. Great masters of poetry, painting, and statuary, in their nobler works, have even affected the contrary. And justly; for a truly masculine air partakes more of the *negligent* than of the *neat*, both in writings and in life.

Grandis oratio haberet majestatis suae pondus.

PETRON.

A poem, like a criminal, under too severe correction, may lose all its spirit, and expire. We know it was *faberimus*, that was such an artist at a hair, or a nail; and we know the cause was,

Quia ponere totum

Nescius.——

HOR.

To close, if a piece of this nature wants an apology, I must own, that those who have strength of mind sufficient profitably to devote the whole of their time to the severer studies, I despair of imitating, I can only envy and admire. The mind is relieved and strengthened by variety; and he that sometimes is sporting with his pen, is only taking the most effectual means of giving a *general* importance to it. This truth is clear from the knowledge of *human nature* and of *history*; from which I could cite very celebrated instances, did I not fear, that by citing them I should condemn myself, who am so little qualified to follow their example in its full extent.

F I N I S.



